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Defense Organization and Military Strategy — *Samuel P. Huntington*

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When policy outstrips power— American strategy and statecraft

ELIOT A. COHEN

WHETHER or not they have lived up to it, American statesmen have always insisted on the need to integrate military capabilities and foreign policy. As a homeowner should be careful to buy a house whose mortgage payments he can afford, it has been held, so should a state undertake only those foreign policy commitments it has the resources and will to make good on. But by now, there is a substantial and articulate (though far from public) school of thought that holds that we must set aside questions of foreign policy before tackling issues of defense. This school argues that the attempt to link strategy tightly to foreign policy is chimerical, a waste of effort and time.

In its traditional sense, strategy is the raising, equipping, and organizing of military forces, and the planning for their operational use in the pursuit of political objectives. (This definition implies a concentration on the realm of conventional as opposed to nuclear warfare, for it is difficult, though not impossible, to contrive nuclear strategies whose

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Editors' note: In this election year, The Public Interest *has asked several noted defense analysts to assess, from a domestic perspective, the current state of American defense policy. The remaining articles, to be published in the Summer 1984 issue, will include discussions of systems analysis, officer education, women in the military, and the rhetoric of American foreign policy.*

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aim extends much beyond the simple goal of nuclear deterrence.) At least four arguments, issuing from completely different quarters, are now being mustered in opposition to this admittedly simple view of strategy.

Criticisms of strategic thinking

First, it is said, military power may no longer be a useful tool of foreign policy.[1] A second argument is that real military power—expressed in terms of men, machines, bases, doctrines, and so on—carries far less weight in international politics than *perceptions* of power: "The reputation of power is power," as Hobbes wrote.[2] Third, it is argued that military force is fungible, and that a flexible military force can meet foreign policy requirements at various points on the globe.[3] Fourth, one may concede that it is desirable to bring real forces into line with foreign policy, but argue that, politics being what it is, this is impossible.[4]

There is some merit to each of these arguments, but separately and together they still fail to excuse statesmen from matching capabilities to policy. The argument that force is no longer useful—that economic and ideological issues not susceptible to resolution by force or threat of force now dominate relations between states—stands largely refuted by the evidence of the past decade. Military force has proved useful for a number of powers, including the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, and a host of lesser states. Afghanistan, the Falklands, the Lebanon War of 1982, and miscellaneous conflicts in Africa and Asia (for that matter, even the mini-invasion of Grenada in 1983) testified to the continuing effectiveness of military instruments of foreign policy. The growing importance of some economic issues—oil in particular, but strategic minerals also—in no way diminishes the importance of

[1] For a sober articulation of this view, see Robert Keohane and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1977). A popular study of foreign policy problems during the Carter administration discussed four "functional" (as opposed to "areal" or regional) sets of problems—U.S. foreign economic policy, North-South economic relations, nuclear proliferation, and human rights: of overall strategic concerns, not a hint. Kenneth A. Oye, Donald Rothchild, Robert J. Lieber, eds., *Eagle Entangled: U.S. Foreign Policy in a Complex World* (New York: Longman, 1979).

[2] See the interesting, if rambling, discussion in Earl C. Ravenal, "Perceptions of American Power," in Franklin D. Margiotta, ed., *Evolving Strategic Realities: Implications for U.S. Policymakers* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1980), pp. 145-170.

[3] This seems to be the view of most defense officials. See Weinberger, *Annual Report of the Secretary of Defense, 1984*, pp. 37-39. It is the logic which creates a Rapid Deployment Force, now Central Command, from forces which are also dedicated to a number of other missions, including European ones.

[4] A view persuasively argued by Aaron Wildavsky in *The Politics of the Budgetary Process* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1964).

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military force. For example, the potential for American military involvement in the Persian Gulf in order to protect supplies of oil to the West and Japan has, if anything, increased since the oil embargo of 1973.

Perceptions of power are, of course, important. But the view that a wise statesman will concern himself only with creating the impression of will, rather than wasting his energies adjusting military means to political ends, is faulty; it fails to address the issue of where perceptions come from. They are, in fact, based more on real capabilities than on simple calculations of the will to use such capabilities. It is true that in the case of nuclear weapons, a state with several hundred warheads (such as Britain, France, or China) might deter a state with many thousands (such as the Soviet Union) if the lesser power seems willing to inflict mortal wounds on an adversary capable of annihilating it. But this is the psychology of nuclear deterrence; it is not the calculus of nuclear war-fighting, and it does not apply to comparably unequal distributions of conventional power. Even during the Vietnam War, when American forces had been engaged in intensive combat for years, it was difficult to persuade an opponent, North Vietnam, of the seriousness of American intent. In the end, a president changed enemy perceptions only through a massive use of force—the 1972 Christmas bombings. A previous policy, based on the importance of perception and signaling, had failed because abstract declarations of will are far less potent than the actual use of force.

The argument that force is fungible—that foreign policy commitments need not be considered like accumulated debts, but rather like a bank's multiple savings accounts, which the banker need not cover all at once—is an attractive one, for it implies that one can meet many military commitments by means of a small, high-quality force capable of intervening anywhere. Here too, though, problems arise. The realities of commitments, politics, and logistics conspire to make military forces—particularly land forces—inflexible, and indeed immovable. How would a small central force cope with simultaneous military challenges in different areas? How does one address the political necessity of being permanently deployed—i.e., having troops that cannot easily be uprooted—in a potential theater of conflict (such as Europe), and is one willing to forgo the substantial military advantages of such deployments? And can one make centralized forces mobile enough to go quickly and effectively to any possible theater of war? Proponents of this view have yet to answer these questions adequately. Moreover, it is simply not true that military forces can fight any opponent in any theater with equal effectiveness. A navy, for example, whose strategic mission is to keep the Atlantic sea lanes open during an all-out war

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with the Soviet Union might well rely on large numbers of small, sea-control aircraft carriers, and the backing of long-range air power. But a navy whose main role is to support interventions against lesser, non-nuclear powers should procure the large aircraft carriers of the current American fleet; though they are more vulnerable to the nuclear-tipped weapons of the Soviet Union, they are far more capable of projecting conventional air power ashore than smaller carriers are. As another example, an army schooled and equipped for European warfare is not well-suited for jungle warfare, and vice-versa.[5]

The fourth argument, that it is politically impossible to align foreign policy and strategy, is perhaps the most persuasive, for it seems to correspond to the daily realities of policy-making as we know them: vested interests, a cumbersome bureaucracy, an obstreperous Congress, the sheer vastness of the problem itself, and so on. But again, there are difficulties with this argument. In the first place, everyone does agree that budgets and organizations can and do change, at least at the margin. If this is the case, statesmen should know in which direction to push such marginal changes, because a series of small alterations can in time amount to a fundamental transformation of policy; in the long run, entrenched institutions can be forced to yield to rational policies. In a broader sense, it is certainly conceivable that a peacetime leader might have the determination and skill needed to impose his vision on a defense establishment; the careers of Robert McNamara and Elihu Root remind us of this. And above all, though it is a melancholy thought, the truth is that military institutions are usually open to fundamental changes after defeats, or after Pyrrhic victories: Such was the experience of Prussia after the calamities of Jena and Auerstaedt, of the French after the Franco-Prussian War, of the United States after the Spanish-American War, and of Great Britain after the Boer War. If this is indeed the case, it would be prudent (if not optimistic) to have a comprehensive view of the strategy/foreign policy problem in mind, in order to refashion American strategy in the event of a similar experience.

A successful integration of foreign policy and strategy rests on an ability to do what the state has pledged itself to do. Bluffing is morally irresponsible, for it places at risk both the interests of the state and the lives of those soldiers who stand as the pledge of will or intent.

[5] An interesting demonstration of this can be seen in the 1982 Falklands War: The Royal Marine Commandos who were accustomed to operations in terrain similar to that of the Falklands (northern Scotland and Norway) performed better than the soldiers of the 5th Brigade. The latter—elite troops though they were—took time to adjust to the rigors of amphibious warfare in the hills and bogs of the Falklands. Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, *The Battle for the Falklands* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983), pp. 267-9, 319-321.

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The United States in the postwar period has, until the present time, possessed a surplus of power, and thus has forgotten the implications of the failure to align means and ends. But the historical record on such failures and bluffs is clear. Following World War I, the French pursued a policy of containing German power, and did so by contracting alliances with several East European states. Rather than create the military forces needed to execute this foreign policy—an offensive armored force, in particular—France built the Maginot Line and a vast, ponderous conscript army. During the same period the United States attempted to contain Japanese expansion into Southeast Asia, but without fortifying island bases in the Pacific and the Philippines, and without coordinating a serious defensive policy with Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, and the various colonial governments of the region. In 1967, Egypt pursued a confrontation with Israel, and tried, without the requisite strength, to impose a blockade. In each of these cases, deterrence failed, and swift, bloody disaster ensued.

It is instructive, by way of contrast, to consider the policy of those statesmen who conducted British foreign and strategic policy throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when British military power was steadily declining relative to the power of other states. As in the case of the United States today, the issue was not Britain's *absolute* power—measured in terms of soldiers, ships, and firepower—which continued to increase, but rather the extraordinary increase in the capabilities of nations whose goals might conflict with Britain's. A biographer of Lord Salisbury, the central figure in this period, writes:

> Bluff played no part in the conduct of Salisbury's diplomacy. A policy based on so false a foundation, he was convinced, was bound to lead to disaster. He therefore insisted on knowing exactly whether Britain's military strength was equal to supporting whatever policy happened to be under discussion.[6]

As other states (Germany, the United States, Russia, and others) gained power, British statesmen assiduously attempted to maintain the conformity of power to statecraft. Their example is instructive—as the example of France is cautionary—to a power with commitments as wide as those of the United States today.

The growth of American commitments

Two principles have characterized American foreign policy since World War II: containment and conservation. As in the late 1940s,

[6] J. A. S. Grenville, *Lord Salisbury and Foreign Policy: The Close of the Nineteenth Century* (London: The Athlone Press, 1964), pp. 17-18. I have benefited greatly from the insights of Mr. Aaron Friedberg in the matter of this analogy.

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American foreign policy today aims to limit the spread of Soviet influence, which has grown in parts of the world (Central America, the Arab Middle East, southern Africa, East Asia, and Northwest Asia) from which it had traditionally been excluded by American, British, and Japanese foreign policy and force. But unlike its tendency in the 1940s, American foreign policy now concentrates on excluding Soviet military forces, rather than on containing Soviet ideological influence. If there is a heightened sense of threat in the United States today, it stems from concern about the global projection of Soviet power rather than from concerns over the attractiveness of Soviet ideology, which have diminished steadily. On the other hand, the relationship between ideology and political-military influence remains a strong one: Those states (Nicaragua, for example) that have recently joined the Soviet camp also follow Leninist forms of political organization and seek to export their ideology.

By and large, containment has succeeded. Soviet influence in Europe, Japan, and large parts of East Asia (the Philippines, Malaysia, and Indonesia, in particular) has not advanced greatly, if at all, since the late 1940s. On the other hand, the Soviets now have regionally potent clients in Central America (Nicaragua and Cuba), the Middle East (Syria), and East Asia (Vietnam). These states do not act exclusively as tools of Soviet foreign policy, but their interests coincide with those of the USSR, and they find themselves economically and militarily dependent on remaining in the Soviet Union's good graces. Moreover, the Soviets have extended their influence in Africa and Northwest Asia through the development of weak but dependent clients (Angola, for example, and Afghanistan) sustained by Soviet arms and proxy forces. The policy of containment, designed though it was for the Eurasian periphery, now reflects a global conflict between the two superpowers. And these new areas of competition are of significant importance: In some cases they represent sources of vital raw materials (oil, most notably, but also, in the African case, scarce strategic minerals); in other cases, they involve areas of particular political importance to the United States—Central America being the best example.

Containment depends on a number of foreign policy tools, not all of them military. Nonetheless, as Korea and the Cuban Missile Crisis revealed, it does ultimately depend on American willingness to use force to repel Soviet probes—probes usually conducted not by the Soviets but by their clients. Containment will continue to be necessary, since the Soviet Union shows no signs of abandoning its tendency to probe and take advantage of weakness in order to enhance its geopolitical position.

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American foreign policy has rested on another pillar as well, the conservation of the world order as it stood at the end of the 1940s. The elements of this world order include an open world economy, agreed-upon and virtually unchangeable borders, and the support of moderate (i.e., non-revolutionary) regimes, which can have republican, monarchical, or limited autocratic forms of government. The United States, in short, has endeavored to guard and maintain the status quo it had created between 1944 and 1949.

Again, broadly speaking, this policy has been a success, but it too has come under increasing strain. Revolutionary powers in various parts of the globe have tried, with increasing success, to challenge the American world order. As the case of a Qaddafi or a Khomeini indicates, these powers may have sources of support and an authenticity that belie the notion that they are simply Soviet clients. Nonetheless, they threaten American interests and American allies. In addition, in many parts of the world rapid industrialization has combined with a fertility explosion to create societies that are ripe for revolutionary social change. Modern communications technology, including transistor radios and tape cassette players, eases the task of agitation; the examples of each revolutionary success (from Algeria to Cuba, from Nicaragua to Iran) will encourage further efforts by similar movements.

Even non-revolutionary states are increasingly willing to disrupt the postwar order by challenging one of its key precepts, the sanctity of borders. Morocco's seizure of a former Spanish colony, Indonesia's occupation of East Timor, Argentina's attempted occupation of the Falklands, Turkey's partition of Cyprus, Senegal's absorption of Gambia, Libya's virtual annexation of northern Chad, and Syria's conquest of more than half of Lebanon—all point to a world in which the resort to force is more common, and less likely to run into international resistance, than ever before. Not only are third powers more willing to use force to get their way than in the past; they also have a greater ability to do so. The diffusion of military technology (perhaps best exemplified by the Falklands War of 1982) has enabled these third powers to fight the local forces of superpowers on relatively equal terms.

Thus, America enters the 1980s and 1990s with a foreign policy that remains sound in its outlines, but is increasingly difficult to maintain, particularly with respect to the use of military force. In 1964, at what was perhaps the peak of American power and world influence, major American foreign policy *cum* military commitments extended to Europe, Korea, Japan, and to a much lesser extent the Mediterranean and East Asia. Today, not only do those core commitments remain; America now prepares to project force into the Persian Gulf (an area

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still under British tutelage in 1960), its troops conduct exercises in Central America with an eye toward the possibility of confronting Nicaraguan and Cuban forces, and America has extended security guarantees to a variety of countries—including Thailand and the Sudan—that are under the very real threat not only of subversion, but of invasion as well.

The United States has not, meanwhile, contracted new alliances to help deal with its problems. Even detente with China rests chiefly on the tempered awareness of a mutual hostility towards the Soviet Union. Ideological and cultural differences between the United States and the People's Republic of China, coupled with America's attitude towards Taiwan, have prevented the development of a warmer relationship. Nor does anything forever preclude a Chinese detente with the Soviet Union, although one has yet to develop. Moreover, China (like another erstwhile Soviet ally, Egypt) must constantly be preoccupied with its own internal problems—a burgeoning population and a primitive economy, for example. As a result it can offer little help in relieving American strategic burdens. As a military power, it is weaker than at any time since the Korean War, barely capable of facing down the Vietnamese, let alone the Soviets (in part because the Soviets have matched their buildup in Western Europe and overseas with an equivalent buildup along the Chinese border). Finally, the United States has lost militarily potent allies: the Shah of Iran and lesser Arab potentates to revolution; the British, once the world's third great power, to a steady decline of economic vitality and sense of mission.

America's strategic position

What is America's strategy? How do its defense planners propose to cope with the multiple commitments outlined above and the force requirements they entail? The official source for an answer to such questions is the *Annual Report of the Secretary of Defense*, a tome that includes the authoritative discussion of "Foundations of Defense Policy," "Threats to U.S. Security Objectives," and "U.S. Defense Strategy."[7]

The current report begins with a quotation from the first Secretary of Defense, James Forrestal: "It is our duty to see that our military potential conforms to the requirements of our national policy; in other words, that our policy does not outstrip our power." But the report goes on to discuss American foreign policy in only the most cursory

[7] Caspar W. Weinberger, *Annual Report to the Congress of the Secretary of Defense Fiscal Year 1984* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983).

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way. At no point does the report attempt to answer the question, "Can American forces meet foreign policy requirements?" Rather, it defines American defense strategy as consisting of three main principles: defense—the United States will not initiate a war; deterrence—the United States hopes to scare a potential attacker through the threat of unacceptable levels of cost; and the restoration of peace on favorable terms—the United States will deny an enemy his objectives and attempt to restore peace at the lowest possible cost to itself and its allies. The supporting policies behind these principles are "collective defense," "forward deployment," and "flexibility of forces."

Strictly speaking, neither the principles nor the supporting policies amount to a strategy, and only the first principle—that the United States is a defensive power—has a close relation to strategy. If the essence of strategy is the matching of military means to political ends, then a desire to achieve deterrence, particularly in the realm of conventional warfare, does not excuse policy-makers from planning and making decisions about the preparation of military forces for operational use in support of foreign policy goals. An avowed desire to restore peace on favorable terms is similarly a platitude, not a statement of strategic design.

In addition, the "supporting policies" are all, in some degree, mutually contradictory. Forward-deployed forces are forces committed to a certain geographical region in advance of war—for political reasons primarily, they are not, therefore, flexible. Similarly, collective defense is at odds with strategic flexibility, since coalition warfare is notoriously more difficult and more rigid than war waged by and for one country.

The problem here is not simply with the most recent Secretary of Defense's report. Rather, the vague and evasive language of that document reflects a more profound problem in American defense decision-making and organization. American strategic policy has been formulated on an ad hoc and incoherent basis: Its force structure is the product of inertia, bureaucratic rivalries, and the odd presidential decision. Bureaucratic and political impediments block the way to an integrated foreign policy and strategy, to be sure, but so does the difficulty of the problem. The United States has no clear guide for choice in its development of air, naval, or land power, because unlike any previous power in history—even the British Empire—it must prepare to wage different kinds of war in every corner of the globe. A tally of the physical and human resources that the United States brings to bear on its foreign policy reveals some of the most important dimensions of this strategy/foreign policy mismatch.

Manpower: In 1960, well before the Vietnam era defense buildup,

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the United States active duty military consisted of some 2.5 million men and women. This force was backed by a huge reserve of trained draftees who had left the military service—a force of well over four million. In 1982, the active duty force numbered approximately 2.1 million, backed by a reserve of comparable size.[8] Such numerical comparisons do not, moreover, take into account the fragility of a manpower system dependent on voluntary enlistment, particularly of large numbers of women. Moreover, by 1982 the Army, in particular, had become heavily dependent on reserve component units to fill out its 16 understrength active divisions (this is the "Total Force" concept). This policy has two results: First, unit readiness decreases the need to call up and deploy reserve units with the active force; second, any decision to use force on a large scale (for example, the activation of the Rapid Deployment Force) will require a serious political decision—a decision for a reserve mobilization.

Equipment: The American armed forces today depend heavily on the superior quality of their weaponry. This was not always the case: In World War II, for example, and even in Korea, opposing forces frequently had better equipment, but considerably less of it. There is no reason not to exploit high technology, of course, but the tendency to rely on it as a "force multiplier," in the jargon of military planners, runs the risk of creating an armed force excessively dependent on technology for victory. This may be a particularly acute problem in those parts of the world (i.e., most non-European theaters of war) where some elements of technological superiority may be unusable because of the local climate and terrain.

More important, American military equipment (with the interesting exception of naval vessels) remains suited chiefly to the demands of European warfare. The continuing dearth of truly air-transportable armored personnel carriers and tanks is one example of this; the tendency to "heavy up" or mechanize all infantry units is another.[9] In one respect alone does the United States retain forces suited to warfare outside of Europe—in its expensive but capable fleet of large aircraft carriers. The utility of such vessels is frequently and misleadingly debated in the context of an all-out war with the Soviet Union, but there can be no doubt that such vessels (and their new companions, the re-activated battleships) remain extremely useful for the projection of power into remote areas of the world.

Deployments: About one third of the American Army and Marine

[8] Statistics taken from Department of Defense, *Selected Manpower Statistics, Fiscal Year 1982* (Washington, D.C.: Directorate for Information, Operations, and Reports, 1983).
[9] This problem is gradually being corrected by the development of light divisions by the American Army—an extremely slow process, however. See the several articles in *Armed Forces Journal International* (October 1983).

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Global Distribution of U.S. Forces, 1982 (numbers in thousands; percentage of worldwide forces given in parentheses)[1]

LOCATION	ARMY[2]	AIR FORCE[3]	NAVY[4]	MARINE[5]	TOTAL
Worldwide	780 (100%)	583 (100%)	553 (100%)	192 (100%)	2,109 (100%)
U.S. and Territories	513 (66%)	465 (80%)	448 (81%)	154 (80%)	1,580 (75%)
Europe	227 (29%)	82 (14%)	40 (7%)	7 (4%)	356 (17%)
East Asia/ Pacific	31 (4%)	34 (6%)	47 (8%)	26 (14%)	138 (6%)
Africa, Near East, South Asia	2 (—)	1 (—)	11 (2%)	3 (2%)	17 (1%)
Western Hemisphere	7 (1%)	6 (1%)	2 (—)	1 (—)	16 (1%)

[1] Source: Department of Defense, *Selected Manpower Statistics, Fiscal Year 1982* (Washington, D.C.: Directorate for Information, Operations, and Reports, 1983). Numbers and percentages are rounded, and so may not total. Statistics do not reflect recent deployments to the Caribbean, Central America, or Lebanon. In addition, it should be noted that virtually all military personnel are trained only in the U.S.; thus all forces deployed overseas are trained personnel. For notes 2 through 5 below, source is: *The Military Balance 1983-1984* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1983).

[2] Of 16 Army divisions, four are deployed in Europe, one in South Korea.

[3] Of some 80 tactical Air Force squadrons, approximately 40 are deployed in the U.S., 30 in Europe, 11 in the Pacific (six in Korea, three in Japan, and two in the Philippines).

[4] Of 13 Navy aircraft carriers (only 12 of which have air wings), five are with the 2nd Fleet (Atlantic), three with the 3rd Fleet (Eastern Pacific), three or four with the 7th Fleet (Western Pacific), one or two with the 6th Fleet (Mediterranean). The Indian Ocean task force is made up of forces detached from the 7th Fleet, usually one carrier. Ordinarily, only five carriers are deployed at any given time; the balance are undergoing repairs, or in port to give their crews shore leave.

[5] Of three Marine Amphibious Forces (the equivalent of divisions, with their own air support), one is stationed on the West Coast, one on the East Coast, and one in Okinawa. Forces detached from the MAFs include one Marine Amphibious Unit (the equivalent of a battalion) stationed on ships in the Indian Ocean, and one in the Mediterranean.

Corps is deployed overseas, a fact that seems to offer the United States considerable political and military advantages, but which, in fact, does not (see Table). Most of those forces, above all the Army units in Europe and Korea, cannot be moved to other regions of the world because of the political uproar that would ensue. The reluctance of the Europeans to allow American bases in Europe to be used for support to Israel during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War is but one indication of the power of host governments—even host governments as friendly as those of Western Europe—to impede the use of forward-deployed American forces. In addition, statesmen will find forward-deployed forces difficult to use because of the potential political implications of withdrawing troops from an area in time of crisis. Even during a period of relative calm, President Carter's attempt to withdraw American ground troops from Korea provoked many observers (including interested parties on both sides of the Korean de-militarized zone) to

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believe that America's commitment to the Republic of Korea was ebbing.

Perhaps, one might argue, America's naval power might substitute for the inflexibility of its forward-deployed, ground-based forces. In this view the powerful carrier force of the American Navy, coupled with a relatively large (180,000-man) light infantry force—the Marine Corps—can provide a mobile strategic reserve for non-European contingencies. Yet here too the reasoning is faulty. For one thing, only five out of 14 carriers are usually deployed overseas at any given time, and even these have lately been plagued with severe readiness problems. The Marines, moreover, find themselves committed to a host of military assignments including some (European warfare) for which they are ill-equipped, being, as they are, essentially a light infantry force.

Two other deployment questions exacerbate the strategy/foreign policy mismatch. The first concerns the commitment of U.S.-based forces to European contingencies: The dedication of most Army divisions to Europe affects the overall allocation of resources and, more important, the structure and outlook of the American Army. Understandably, American planners now concentrate on the problems of fighting and winning a European war, and they buy equipment and design doctrine for just that purpose (the United States now has equipment for two divisions in Europe, and intends to add enough equipment for two more). Inevitably, these preoccupations occur at the expense of strategic flexibility: Forces designed for European warfare cannot be adequately prepared for other contingencies.

Second, the United States is finding it more costly and difficult to maintain the string of non-European bases required to support its global interests. Not only are the financial costs of basing agreements higher than in the past, but host governments are increasingly anxious to restrict America's use of such bases. The effort to acquire strategic bases in the Persian Gulf area is an example. Yielding to the demands of local governments, the United States has not pressed for the rights to station troops—even administrative and support personnel—in friendly countries such as Egypt, Somalia, Oman, and Saudi Arabia. Instead, the United States has attempted to maintain an "over-the-horizon" presence, which requires a greater capability for air-lift and sea-lift in time of crisis. In addition, the United States has lost the benefits of acclimatization, which would be critical to sudden military intervention in an area such as the Persian Gulf.

Furthermore, political instability in a number of Third World countries threatens the safety and even the long-term existence of overseas bases. It is a general phenomenon of the post-war period: Britain's loss

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of the Suez Canal zone, its fulcrum of power in the Middle East, was simply the first in a series of losses in the area. The British withdrawal from Aden (now South Yemen) was a further concession to Third World nationalism, as was America's departure from a major air base in Libya a few years later. Many American overseas bases—particularly the vast naval and air complex at Subic Bay in the Philippines—are increasingly threatened by local nationalism and anti-American sentiments. The Soviets, to be sure, have had their own difficulties, most notably in Egypt in 1972, but they have more than compensated for this by new acquisitions—Cam Ranh bay in Vietnam, the former British base in Aden, and Afghanistan being examples.

Higher Defense Organization: In the long run, the efficiency of a defense organization is as important to its success as the physical assets under its control. Although it is hard to claim that the American defense organization is worse than it was in the early 1960s, one can surely say that it has not improved. When resources were plentiful, these faults could be overcome or shunted aside by virtue of the sheer weight of American power. But now that American forces are stretched thin, efficiency at the top of the organization becomes critically important. Again, the British model is a striking one. After the Boer War, Britain became acutely aware of threats to its global position, in particular its naval supremacy. Its leaders reacted not only with increased expenditure, changed deployments, and new tactical doctrines; they also conducted wrenching institutional reforms at the highest level, creating vigorous general staffs coordinated by an efficient Committee on Imperial Defence.

The current American system of Supreme Command is radically unsatisfactory. The chiefs of the various services struggle with administrative and operational planning responsibilities, and in peacetime it is the latter that suffer. The Joint Staff is composed of transitory personnel, whose career interests rest in pleasing members of their individual services, rather than in serving the larger interests of the national defense. Above all, intensive Congressional scrutiny and the pressures of the budget force military leaders to think not in terms of strategic planning but in terms of weapons acquisition. At higher levels, the United States has yet to remedy the problems of divided command and civil-military war direction that plagued the war in Vietnam.

The overall organization of American forces is also defective. The major interventionary force is the Central Command (formerly the Rapid Deployment Force). This ungainly conglomeration of units consists of the 24th Mechanized Division, the 82nd Airborne Division, the 101st Airmobile Division, and one Marine division. Fully one third

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of this force consists of reservists (approximately 100,000), and none of these units is an organic part of the Central Command in peacetime. To be sure, the RDF occasionally practices small operations together. But this is a poor substitute for the continual association of this entire small army, under one commander with one set of instructions. RDF components themselves have a number of other responsibilities—the 82nd Airborne is also a general readiness force, and the 24th Mechanized must be prepared to reinforce the European theater in time of war. As a result, the RDF cannot spend most of its time training for the kind of operations it is most likely to undertake—operations in the Persian Gulf.

In practice, the United States has only one division to act as a genuine central reserve, the 82nd Airborne. With the exception of a few specialized units, it is the only major organization in the Army prepared to deploy at very short notice anywhere in the globe. As a result, the 82nd must spread itself thin, attempting to prepare for warfare in any climate from the Arctic to the desert, and in any terrain, from mountains to cities. The requirement that the 82nd maintain a constant high level of readiness detracts from its ability to train. The strain on the men involved is immense, and one must remember that *no* military organization is equally capable of all kinds of missions.

The search for solutions

In sum, the United States today is an overcommitted power. Its forces are smaller than they were twenty years ago, and they are poised more awkwardly overseas. These forces are directed by a defense organization that proved itself deficient in its last major test of war, and which does not have the confidence of those who lead it.[10] Since the Cuban Missile Crisis, the U.S. has lost, permanently, the once overwhelming nuclear superiority that provided its margin of advantage in that confrontation, and must now spend vast sums to maintain parity with the Soviet Union. America's position, and that of its allies, is more tenuous than at any time since 1950. Perhaps America's real military strength has grown (if one relies on arbitrary measures of sheer firepower), but what matters is its strength relative to its needs. This has declined, and declined sharply.

One may again turn to the analogy with Great Britain at the turn of the century. British statesmen pursued a fourfold policy to redress the

[10] Such would appear to be the case when the most recent Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General David Jones, and one of his most respected colleagues, former Army Chief of Staff General Edward Meyer, have begun lobbying for substantial changes in America's higher defense organization.

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capabilities/commitments mismatch. First, they reduced foreign policy commitments. They reconcentrated the British Navy in home waters, virtually ceding control of the Mediterranean to other powers, and they decided to avoid any foreign policy action that would involve a serious clash with the United States. Second, they sought and won new allies, including Japan (1902) and France (1904). These allies (particularly the Japanese) counterbalanced the two most important threats to British security, Russia and Germany. Third, the British substantially increased their defense expenditures, although selectively: They held the Army budget constant, but poured millions of pounds into the Navy in order to ensure continued naval supremacy. This expenditure went to the acquisition not merely of more ships, but of better and more powerful ones (the Dreadnought class). Fourth, the British conducted intensive organizational reform, at the very top (by creating the Committee on Imperial Defence) and in each of the services. Modern general staffs were established, and the Army in particular was transformed into a rationally organized active and reserve force. As a result of these intelligent and far-sighted reforms, Britain preserved its security and its empire, even in the course of the first modern global war.

The United States does not, to be sure, face an economic decline like the one that began to afflict Great Britain in 1900. Relatively, as well as absolutely, its position as primary naval power and guarantor of the world economic order is far better than that of its predecessor. At the same time, however, at least two of the policies pursued by Britain are not available to the United States. The U.S. has no Great Powers to win as allies and thereby redress the imbalance. Instead, it has a host of more or less dependent countries, some of which are of intrinsically limited utility as military partners—it is difficult to imagine Israel, though an invaluable ally in the Middle East, dispatching 20,000 troops to the Persian Gulf, for example—some of which are prey to unstable domestic politics (Egypt, Thailand), some of which are so unappetizing that strategic cooperation is impossible for reasons of domestic politics (South Africa), and some of which are allies on a highly conditional basis (France or Greece). Moreover, the asymmetry between the United States and any prospective ally (Pakistan, for example) is so great that rather than offering an addition to U.S. strength, most allies simply represent further commitments.

At the same time, the United States cannot simply reduce its commitments. One precondition for Britain's ability to do so without suffering damage to its interests was the existence of moderate, well-disposed Great Powers to take up the slack—the United States and, in the case

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of the Mediterranean, France. The United States's effort to cultivate "regional influentials," during the early 1970s, was somewhat similar to the British policy. Under the Nixon administration in particular, it was hoped that these regional powers could relieve the United States of some of the burdens of a global foreign policy. The best example of this policy was America's cultivation of the Shah of Iran as the "policeman" of the Persian Gulf. Following the precipitate British decision to leave the Gulf in 1968, American leaders hoped that a powerful Iranian state could replace the British. But the Iranian revolution of 1978 put an end to these hopes, and revealed the fragility inherent in a policy of fabricating Great Powers.

All this is not to say that the United States could not reduce the *intensity* of some of its military commitments, particularly by cutting back the forces it commits to NATO and by pressing the Japanese to assume a much greater defense burden in East Asia. Nonetheless, it will be extremely difficult for the United States to do this, for a number of reasons. For one thing, the allies involved may simply refuse to pick up the slack left by a reduction in American military forces. What is worse, the result of an ill-conceived or poorly executed reduction could be European or Japanese neutralism, or appeasement of the Soviet Union. Finally, the Soviets might well consider such a reduction to be a sign of American weakness, and hence an invitation to probe America's shrinking spheres of influence.

Nor is the solution to be found, as the Reagan administration has maintained, simply in across-the-board increases in the size of the defense budget. To be sure, the defense budgets of the last year of the Carter administration and of the first three years under Reagan have improved the readiness of the armed forces and sped modernization, particularly in the realm of conventional weaponry such as tanks and anti-aircraft weapons. But these increases, however large, cannot restore American forces to their relative strength as of 1964: The deterioration has simply been too great, and the causes of that deterioration too profound. Budget increases will not address the fundamental overextension of American forces, nor do they address the organizational problems that prevent American power from being adequate for its policies. As we have seen, military forces are not perfectly fungible: The problem is not one of the quality of armed forces, but of their structure and orientation. Above all, the realities of peacetime politics (and in particular, of huge budget deficits) preclude a truly massive buildup, on the scale of the one launched following the outbreak of the Korean War.

The problem is a real and difficult one, contrary to the claims of both

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friends and enemies of the current administration. It would require efforts beyond the scope of this essay to suggest answers to the foreign policy/strategy mismatch. We can, however, take note of three of the critical questions which must inform any discussion of defense policy:

(1) To what extent should American forces be dedicated to operations in Europe, with all that that implies in terms of manpower selection, equipment, organization, and doctrine?

(2) To what extent should American military policy strive for unilateral capabilities—a costly matter—and to what extent can and should it depend on the cooperation of European and non-European allies?

(3) To what extent should the United States plan for short but intense conflicts, rather than for more protracted but less furious encounters?

Before judging any proposal for military reform, or indeed before trying to evaluate any military institution or program, one must have a strong sense of the purpose of that organization or plan. For example, if the United States intends to prepare its forces primarily for a confrontation with the Soviets in Europe, it should create large, conscription-based forces backed by a Navy whose main purpose would be to secure the freedom of the North Atlantic. If, on the other hand, America's primary interest is in forces for operations in the Third World, it will develop a smaller, lighter, professional force, backed by a powerful Navy capable of projecting power anywhere.

The far from cheering conclusion is that Henry Kissinger's assessment, made in 1960, remains true today: "we lack a strategic doctrine and a coherent military policy." Since that time, and despite Kissinger's own remarkable success as a statesman, America's world position has deteriorated further. Today, even more than then, American defense policy faces the problem Kissinger captured in the title of that remarkable book—the necessity for choice.

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Defense organization and military strategy

SAMUEL P. HUNTINGTON

THE U.S. Department of Defense is not as well organized as it should be to provide effective deterrence in peacetime or to achieve military success in wartime. That is the conclusion of almost all the participants—other than Navy admirals and Marine Corps generals—in the national debate on defense organization that occurred in 1982 and 1983. That debate was kicked off by critiques of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from two people who presumably could speak with authority: General David Jones, USAF, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, and General Edward C. Meyer, USA, Chief of Staff of the Army. Their public criticism focused attention on defects in American defense organization about which officials, scholars, and study groups had expressed concern for years. The Jones-Meyer broadsides brought these concerns out in the open and stimulated the most widespread discussion of defense organization issues in over two decades. Hearings before House and Senate Armed Services committees led to the drafting in Congress of a bill mandating certain relatively modest changes in the structure of the Joint Chiefs. This bill met some of the criticisms, but its passage, if that occurs, clearly will end neither all the critical weaknesses in U.S. defense organization nor the debate over what should be done about them.

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To some, this renewed attention to organizational issues seems like much ado about nothing. They argue that it is not the arrangement of boxes on a chart that counts, but rather the quality of the people in those boxes. Obviously capable people are important, but it is also a mistake to downgrade the significance of formal organizational structure. Organizational structure both reflects and shapes an entity's priorities: It can facilitate or inhibit innovation; it helps define the issues that come to top decision-makers; it is significant in determining who plays what roles in deciding what issues. It also shapes the nature of the decisions that are reached; decisions made by a committee, for instance, will differ from those made by an individual. Good organization cannot guarantee wise policy or effective implementation, but bad organization can make both of these impossible.

Criticism has been directed at many aspects of Defense department organization, including, for instance, procedures for weapons procurement. Varied as the criticisms have been, however, they have tended to focus on the strategic side of the defense establishment—i.e., how decisions are made on overall policy, on the development of military forces, programs, and weapons, and on the use of military force. Those criticisms tend to articulate in a variety of ways a single underlying theme: that there is a gap between defense organization and strategic purpose. This gap is the result of the failure to achieve the purpose of organizational reforms instituted 25 years ago.

The Eisenhower and McNamara reforms

The Department of Defense evolved through two major phases after World War II. The first phase, beginning with the end of the war and continuing until the early 1960s, saw the creation and gradual strengthening of the central defense organization. During this phase, the primary emphasis was on enhancing the authority and power of the Secretary of Defense. This was accomplished through a series of legislative enactments beginning with the National Security Act of 1947 and culminating in the Defense Reorganization Act of 1958. The latter bore the personal imprint of President Eisenhower and prescribed the basic legal structure of the department for the following quarter century. In the early 1960s, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara exploited to the hilt the formal authority of his office and introduced the so-called Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS).

The second phase in the evolution of the Defense department runs from the early 1960s to the early 1980s. During this phase, informed experts and official bodies often studied and frequently criticized de-

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fense organization, but virtually no significant change was made in the formal structure and processes by which the department conducted its business. The intense inter-service controversy which had characterized the 1940s and 1950s subsided; and a high degree of consensus both among the services and, after the departure of McNamara, between civilian and military leaders seemed to prevail.

The reforms initiated by President Eisenhower and Secretary McNamara concentrated on three areas, all related to ways in which the department went about constituting and planning to use military force: strategic planning, combat command, and resource allocation.

In transmitting his 1958 recommendations to Congress, Eisenhower stressed the "vital necessity of complete unity in our strategic planning and basic operational direction." The initiative for strategic planning should "rest not with the separate services but directly with the Secretary of Defense and his operational advisers, the Joint Chiefs of Staff...." Eisenhower wanted to achieve unified strategic planning by making the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff serve as the military staff of the Secretary of Defense. Congress did not approve everything he wanted, but it did strengthen the overall authority of the Secretary over the military services, increase the size of the Joint Staff, and authorize the service chiefs to delegate more of their service responsibilities to their vice-chiefs, so that the chiefs themselves could give higher priority to their joint responsibilities as members of the JCS.

Eisenhower's second major goal, reflecting his experience as Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, was to ensure unity of command of the combat forces. "Separate ground, sea, and air warfare is gone forever," he said. "If ever again we should be involved in war, we will fight it in all elements, with all services, in one single concentrated effort." Hence combat forces must be "organized into combat commands." Congress implemented most of the changes Eisenhower wanted in this area. The President, acting through the Secretary of Defense, was authorized to "establish unified or specified combatant commands for the performance of military missions" and to determine what forces from the three military departments would be assigned to those commands. The chain of command for combat forces went from the President as Commander-in-Chief to the Secretary of Defense and then to the heads of these combat commands (known as commanders-in-chief, or CINCs). The CINCs had "full operational command" of the forces assigned to them from the services, but the services remained responsible for the "administration" of those forces. In due course, virtually all U.S. combat forces were assigned—at least in theory—to unified or specified commands.

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The third major reform of this period was made legally possible by the increased authority given the Secretary of Defense in the 1958 reorganization act. It became a reality in 1961 and 1962 with McNamara's introduction of PPBS. Its purpose was to provide a more rational process for decisions on force structure, strategic programs, and weapons systems. It was to replace a system in which the Secretary of Defense set budget ceilings for the services, and the services then largely determined how they would spend that money. PPBS was an effort to tie together planning and budgeting, to look at programs "horizontally" across service lines, to determine in a comprehensive manner the true costs that might be associated with new programs, and to do all of this in terms of a rolling five-year planning cycle, instead of focusing simply upon next year's budget. McNamara moved quickly to introduce this system in 1961. Although congressional and bureaucratic resistance limited the extent of his success, he was, nonetheless, able to achieve a large part of what he wanted, and he created the framework within which resource allocation decisions were made within the department for 20 years thereafter.

The Eisenhower-McNamara reforms were thus designed to achieve the following: centralized and coherent strategic planning; the rational allocation of resources to forces, programs, and weapons; and unified command of combat forces. But during the following 20 years, none of these goals has been realized satisfactorily. The history of the Defense department has been a history of conflict between the intentions of Eisenhower and McNamara, on the one hand, and the interests of the services on the other. The outcome of that conflict was never in doubt. The services won, hands down. They successfully defeated the wishes of a five-star President and an awesomely vigorous Secretary of Defense and made the legislative language and administrative procedures of those officials work to serve service interests. Never have the American military services scored a more complete victory.

The services and "servicism"

Under the Eisenhower-McNamara system, the individual services *per se* were not supposed to fight wars, to make strategy, or to determine overall force structure. In fact, they continued to exercise a prevailing influence in each of these areas. Instead of developing a system for coherent central strategic planning, the Joint Chiefs continued to give priority to their role as spokesmen for their services, and Joint Staff officers bargain among themselves, each trying to get the most for his service. Instead of rational choices of programs and weapons most

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needed to serve national purposes, such choices are still largely determined by service needs and service interests, resulting in duplication of some programs, misallocation of resources to others, and, most important, neglect of still others. Instead of the unified command of combat forces, command is often fragmented and the unified commanders (CINCs) almost always find their authority over their forces second to that of the services that supplied those forces.

The root cause of these problems stems from the fact that, except for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, all military officers are *service* military officers. Their experiences, training, identifications, personal associations, and, most important, their futures—all are wrapped up in their services. As a result, the only source of non-service or trans-service advice, apart from the Chairman, to which a president or Secretary of Defense can turn, is civilians. The growth of civilian influence in strategy is directly attributable to the failure of the military to approach strategy freed from its service blinders. Not "militarism" but "servicism" is the central malady of the American military establishment.

How can it be limited and its most pernicious effects coped with?

Servicism could, in theory, be abolished by abolishing the separate services. Such drastic action is not, however, desirable, possible, or necessary. The services are invaluable in the specialized expertise they develop, the training they provide, the historical traditions they embody, the loyalties they breed. Tank warfare, submarine operations, and air combat do require very different skills. The organization of the armed forces on the basis of the element in which they operate may not be most rational for some purposes, but it makes a great deal of sense in terms of producing tactical combat units capable of defeating comparable enemy units. One country, Canada, tried to eliminate its three services and merge them into a single entity. This was a dismal failure, and has, in effect, been reversed in practice. Attempting to abolish the U.S. services would be inefficient, wasteful, and counterproductive.

Elimination of the services would be the most extreme approach. The most modest one would be to rely primarily on exhortation to persuade military officers to think and act in non-service terms. This has been tried—often. As has been mentioned, the 1958 reorganization act directed service chiefs to delegate more of their functions as service chiefs to their vice chiefs and to devote more time and energy to their joint responsibilities. Ideally this would have created a situation in which the vice chief would become the spokesman for the service point of view, while the chief of his service would think and act jointly with his colleagues on the Joint Chiefs. In fact, of course, the service chiefs

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could not act this way. They still wore their hats as service chiefs, their identifications were with, and their support came from, their services, and they continued to function primarily as service representatives. They also continued to give high priority to their duties as service chiefs, delegating to their deputies for operations a large portion of their joint responsibilities, thereby accomplishing just the reverse of what the reforms had attempted to promote.

Nor will exhortation through education suffice. Proposals have been advanced, for instance, for joint education for those selected for general or flag officer rank, or for one-year stints for all service academy cadets at the academy of another service. Such educational reforms may be desirable. They will not, however, deal with the problem of servicism. American military officers may learn the virtues of transcending service concerns at joint educational institutions, but when they leave those institutions they will respond to the incentives, rewards, and expectations of the environment in which they operate. Military officers want to serve their country ably and loyally, but the system is structured to make them want to serve their country by serving their service.

Neither elimination of the services nor exhortation to transcend service interests is an effective way of dealing with the evils of servicism. One is too much, the other too little. There are, however, three intermediate approaches that might offer some relief.

First, in some circumstances, incentives and rewards can be structured such that a service acting in its own self-interest will also be responding to national needs. Second, more military officers could be "divorced" from their services by offering them alternative careers in the central defense organization through a general staff corps or similar device, and by expanding the roles and strengthening the power of the JCS Chairman. Third, an enhanced role in the formulation and execution of strategy could be assigned to non-service-oriented civilians; though to some extent this has already occurred, civilians have not been adequately organized to make the most effective contribution to strategic planning and resource allocation. The application of one or more of these three approaches is essential in curbing the effects of servicism on the three most crucial functions of the military, as enumerated in the Eisenhower reform efforts—strategic planning, resource allocation, and combat command.

Strategic planning

The Secretary of Defense is responsible for developing a national military strategy which, when approved by the President and acquiesced

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in by Congress, should provide the basic guidelines and framework for decisions on force levels, programs, and weapons systems, and for the development of operational plans for the use of military force. The national military strategy should serve the nation's foreign policy goals and, at the same time, be compatible with the fiscal constraints that inevitably exist. Strategic planning thus involves first the assessment of threats and of needs, and then the determination of priorities among regions (e.g., Europe versus the Persian Gulf), types of forces (e.g., nuclear versus conventional, regular versus reserves), force dispositions (e.g., forward deployments versus enhanced mobility), timing requirements (e.g., modernization versus readiness), and weapons (e.g., smaller numbers of highly sophisticated weapons versus larger numbers of less capable weapons). It also involves a whole series of closely related issues as to the circumstances under which and how American forces would be used in combat: for example, offensively or defensively, in long wars or short wars, unilaterally or in conjunction with allies, in gradual increments or in a massive initial commitment. These more general and conceptual issues lead into more specific questions of how much of what specific types of force (ground divisions, aircraft carriers, fighter bombers) may be necessary to implement the strategic plans.

In many countries strategic planning is effectively dominated, if not totally monopolized, by the military acting through a central military staff. What is often lacking is an effective civilian counterweight to the strategic advice the military provides the government. In the United States, the situation is almost the reverse. Over the course of several decades, civilian agencies and groups have moved to shape strategy. The two principal offices in the Pentagon through which this has occurred are the Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation, created by McNamara to apply systems analysis to military issues, and the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, which is an outgrowth of and has absorbed the earlier Office of International Security Affairs.

Strategic planning, however, should not be dominated by civilian agencies. In the end, strategic plans have to be implemented by military officers commanding military units, and knowledgeable and responsible military officers ought to play a central role in the development of overall strategic plans. The agency through which the military engages in strategic planning is, of course, the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The most widely criticized deficiency in U.S. defense organization today is the failure of the JCS to play this role effectively.

The litany of criticism of the JCS is long and has been repeated consistently over the years. While some changes and improvements have been made in how it functions, the fundamental problems are

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still those that existed 25 years ago. They basically stem from the composition of the JCS as a committee (except for the Chairman) of service representatives and of the Joint Staff as an organization of officers detailed from their services for brief periods of time and responsible to the JCS in its corporate capacity. Given this structure, the Joint Chiefs and its staff become the arena for the negotiation and resolution of an incredibly wide range of issues, trivial and important, that affect the services. This has several consequences for strategic planning.

First, strategic planning tends to be neglected. Attention is necessarily focused on issues affecting service interests, including resource allocation, personnel assignments, roles and missions, administrative and logistical practices (which service's procedures will be used if they are standardized), and similar types of issues. As a result, the JCS rarely if ever has taken the initiative in developing new strategic concepts or approaches. Over the years these have come from civilians, from individual services, and, at times, even from theater commands (e.g., SHAPE's "deep interdiction" concept); they have not come out of the joint military structure. As one informed observer wrote in 1976: "The JCS has become so bogged down in the cumbersome process which is so concerned with protecting each chief's own service interests that it has become addicted to the status quo and has never been a source of innovation in the national security policy-making process."[1] The neglect of strategy is reinforced by the demands of the annual budgetary authorization and appropriations process, which, to an extent unequalled in other countries, diverts the attention of top-ranking military officers from planning to fight next year's possible war to planning to fight next year's inevitable budget. The military services are, understandably, more concerned with the latter than the former.

Second, to the extent that the JCS does develop strategic plans, these plans often are unrealistic because each service wants them to be based on assumptions that reflect its own estimate of the threat and the forces it will need to counter that threat. Ideally, military strategy should provide for the use of available resources to deal with perceived threats. If strategy is based on the assumption that unavailable resources can be put to use, it is not of much help. But that tends to be the case. This does, however, serve two purposes for the services. First, it reduces conflict and facilitates agreement among them. Second, it enhances the ability of each service to develop the force capabilities it wants to develop. (If a service is told to develop capabilities that would require $50 billion in expenditures, but only gets $35 billion, the

[1] Lawrence J. Korb, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff: The First Twenty-Five Years* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976), p. 24.

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service will have the primary responsibility for deciding which capabilities to emphasize and which to eliminate.)

That strategic plans will often be unintegrated follows as a natural result of this system. The services may and often do plan to fight different wars. The interests of interservice harmony also dictate that almost all issues coming up within the JCS system be negotiated until a position is reached that all four services can accept. The result is language that is often vague, ambiguous, and of little use to those who must make the tough decisions on strategic issues.

Third, as a result of the need to produce four-service agreement, the JCS process usually operates very slowly. In times of crisis, of course, critical issues will be disposed of more expeditiously, but the snail's pace of JCS policy development has been a recurring theme for decades. In the early 1960s, according to Paul H. Nitze, "it would sometimes take them [the Joint Chiefs] three days to blow their nose." In 1970 the Blue Ribbon Defense Panel described JCS procedure as "ponderous and slow." In 1982, said the Air Force Chief of Staff, the planning process was "cumbersome" and took "too long."[2]

Fourth, the quality of the people assigned to the Joint Staff has left something to be desired. The services typically assign their best officers to their own staffs. Officers who have been assigned to the Joint Staff have not been promoted at the same rate as comparable officers who have remained with their services. Various directives requiring officers recommended for promotion to general or flag officer rank to have some joint service experience have not, so far, had much effect in countering this natural service tendency to keep their best for themselves.

Fifth, the functioning of the Joint Staff system creates obstacles to civil-military collaboration in strategic planning. The Joint Staff is a purely military organization, staffed by the services. The Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation is, at present, almost entirely civilian. The Office of the Undersecretary for Policy is the only one of the three top offices in the Pentagon concerned with strategy that, as of 1982, had a reasonable balance of civilian and military talent among its top personnel (about a 60-40 ratio, civilian to military). Effective military planning, as Army Chief of Staff Edward C. Meyer said, requires "much greater interplay between the joint military and civilian leadership"

[2] Paul H. Nitze, quoted in Geoffrey Piller, "DOD's Office of International Security Affairs: The Brief Ascendency of an Advisory System," *Political Science Quarterly* 98 (Spring 1983): 65; Blue Ribbon Defense Panel, *Report to the President and the Secretary of Defense on the Department of Defense 1 July 1970* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1970), pp. 126-128; General Lewis Allen, Jr., quoted in *Armed Forces Journal International* 119 (June 1982): 64.

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than exists at present.[3] A major purpose of the Joint Staff system, however, is to generate position papers upon which all four services agree. To achieve this, civilians are excluded and the services meet *in camera* (or, more accurately, in "the tank," as the JCS meeting room is called) to thrash out their differences so that they then can provide united military advice to civilian decision-makers.

Non-service military institutions

How can those deficiencies in strategic planning be corrected? It is hard to conceive how service interests could be restructured so as to enable them to contribute positively to non-service-oriented strategic planning. Nor can failures in the military contribution to strategic planning be corrected by relying more on civilians. A responsible and powerful military role in strategic planning is essential. The conclusion is that curing the defects in U.S. strategic planning requires an increased role for *non-service* military institutions, and virtually all proposals to deal with the defects of strategic planning attempt to provide for this.

These proposals, roughly speaking, embody two different approaches. The more radical approach would be to create a general staff corps of officers divorced from their services. This would constitute a "purple suit" entity to whom civilian officials could turn for non-service-oriented military advice. A full general staff system has five key characteristics. First, officers are selected to enter the general staff corps relatively early in their careers. Second, their entire subsequent military career is within that corps; they thus pursue a different career line from those officers who remain in the services. Third, upon selection for the general staff corps, officers undergo rigorous and prolonged training (two or three years) in a general staff academy. Fourth, their principal subsequent assignments are to the general staff, to other joint staffs, or to joint commands, with perhaps occasional rotation back to their services. Fifth, their assignments and promotions are made not by their services but by the head of the general staff. Not all general staff systems embody all these features to the same degree. Some minimum combination of them, however, is essential to constitute a general staff corps. Many countries, including the Federal Republic of Germany and the Soviet Union, have some variety of a general staff system.

The introduction of such a system in the United States would improve the effectiveness of military planning and the usefulness of military

[3] Edward C. Meyer, "The JCS—How Much Reform Is Needed?" *Armed Forces Journal International* 119 (April 1982): 86.

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advice to civilian policy-makers. Given the inherent pluralism in the American defense structure, the creation of this additional unit would not threaten civilian control or the legitimate interests of the services. Creation of such an organization, however, would mark a major innovation in American military structure and would only be accomplished, if at all, after prolonged debate and controversy. It would probably require a major military disaster to bring such a system into being.

Given this situation, the more modest alternative for improving strategic planning is to enhance the power and roles of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This could be done in a variety of ways. He could be given the authority to select officers for the Joint Staff and to have a decisive voice on their promotion while on that staff. He could be given authority in his own right, and not as now on behalf of the Joint Chiefs, to manage the Joint Staff. He could be designated, *vice* the Joint Chiefs, as the principal military advisor to Congress, the President, and the Secretary of Defense. This would not mean that the other chiefs would not also have direct access to these civilian officials, but it would place the initiative in making recommendations with the Chairman, the other chiefs being able to file dissents from his views if they so desired. The Chairman could also be given a deputy, who would preside over the chiefs in his absence and who could take the lead in resolving critical issues on behalf of the Chairman. Several of these measures were incorporated in the bills on defense organization that Congress considered in 1982, 1983, and 1984. Measures such as these would not replace the Joint Chiefs of Staff system with a general staff system. They would, however, enable the military to play a more useful, timely, and positive role in strategic planning. In part, they embody changes that the British have already made in their joint staff system, and without which top British military and civilian officials say they could never have conducted the Falklands War as effectively as they did.

Any major organizational change has a variety of consequences. The anticipated and planned consequence of the changes discussed above would be more effective strategic planning. One additional probable consequence of these changes may appear less benign: If power is centralized to a greater degree in the Chairman of the JCS, it is quite likely that the high level of consensus that has prevailed among the military chiefs will decline. At least some of the incentives to unanimity among the chiefs will be weakened. This does not necessarily mean a return to the age of contention that existed in the 1940s and 1950s. It does mean, however, that with the Chairman exercising an independent role of his own, more incentives will exist for individual service

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chiefs to appeal to the Secretary of Defense. This is, indeed, what is necessary to impart greater precision and clearer choices into the strategic planning process. If major contentious issues are not swept under the rug, they will be fought over. Less harmony among the chiefs is the price of clearer choices, more coherent strategy, and more meaningful civilian direction.

Resource allocation and force development

The second area where the Eisenhower-McNamara reforms did not achieve their objectives is the allocation of resources for force development. In various manifestations, PPBS has been followed in form, but it has not eliminated the irrationalities and imbalances in the assignment of resources to forces, programs, and weapons. Service priorities continue to prevail over strategic needs. The resulting deficiences are many and important.

First, as with broader strategic issues, the tendency in the JCS process is for all services to approve the force goals and weapons programs of each. In the early 1980s, consequently, the Joint Chiefs approved requirements for 23 aircraft carriers (as against 14 then existing), 40 air wings (26 existing) and 33 Army divisions (24 existing). By endorsing each other's maximum goals, the chiefs created intra-military consensus at the expense of extra-military relevance. Even the Reagan administration did not endorse such ambitious force levels.

Second, over the years there has been an occasional tendency to return to the practice whereby the Secretary of Defense would set the budget figures for the services and then allow the services to decide, within broad guidelines, how they would allocate their funds. This tendency has been most noticeable under Laird and Weinberger. Its reappearance flew in the face of the whole theory of PPBS, but it was also a natural political development. The Secretary of Defense has to be concerned about expenditure levels, and if the services will acquiesce in ceilings that he and the President find acceptable, it is not unreasonable to let them have the dominant voice in deciding how the money will be spent. The service, on the other hand, will accept lower spending levels in return for greater freedom to allocate resources to those programs that it considers essential to its central missions and identity. The result, however, is that service interests rather than strategic needs play the dominant role in shaping program decisions.

Third, the role of service interests in shaping forces and programs leads to imbalances in military capabilities. Those "orphan" functions that are not central to a service's own definition of its mission tend to

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be neglected. For example, given limited resources, the Air Force and the Navy are not going to give high priority to air and sea lift for the Army, as against bombers and carriers for themselves. Somewhat similarly, the Air Force has been slow to emphasize close air support for the Army, and has done so at times only in response to Army attempts to develop its own capability for close air support. In other cases, no service may wish to give high priority to developing the capabilities to meet a perceived strategic need. This has traditionally been the case with counterinsurgency capabilities, and it was very much the case with the rapid deployment force for intervention in areas such as the Persian Gulf. President Carter ordered the creation of such a force in August 1977, but no service had a major interest in espousing this mission. Despite recurring prods from the White House, the concept languished in the Pentagon for over two years until the Iranian hostage seizure and the invasion of Afghanistan were able to produce a response that a presidential order had failed to generate. In general, extraordinarily active and sustained external prodding, as was the case with McNamara and airlift, is required to get services to develop capabilities that they do not see as central to their role.

Fourth, service dominance in determining programs tends to produce an overemphasis on procurement and investment, as against readiness. Lobbying for the latter has chiefly come only from the commanders-in-chief of the unified and specified commands. The CINCs' interest is to have forces that are well equipped, supplied, trained, and exercised to fight effectively in the near term. The services, on the other hand, are in large part procurement agencies, and they tend to look toward the longer-term needs of investment and modernization. Since the services have more influence than the combat commands in the resource allocation and budgeting process, investment needs tend to be emphasized over readiness needs. This tendency is reinforced by the interests of defense contractors, Congressmen, and their constituents in promoting major weapons systems. It is at times even reinforced by the interests of comptrollers and fiscal officers in holding down immediate expenditures—at the cost of allowing larger new authorizations, the expenditures for which will not peak for three or four years. Clearly a better balance is needed between investment and readiness.

In the competition for resources, the emphasis is thus on service programs to meet service goals. This was the case in 1948 when the Air Force undertook a major compaign to get 70 wings; it remained true in 1981, when the Secretary of the Navy waged a major campaign to get 600 ships. The problem, of course, is that 600 ships may or may

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not meet the strategic needs of the country, although they certainly meet the service needs of the Navy. A large navy is properly the *instrument*, not the *goal*, of strategy. The United States has no interest in a 600-ship navy as such. It does have an interest in having the right combination of ships to serve the strategic purposes of its foreign policy. Six hundred ships of one sort or another might or might not be necessary for those purposes, but that is something that is impossible for the Navy to determine rationally. As the process works, however, an instrumental, service goal supplants strategic goals.

The pre-eminence of service goals in the program development process stems from the failure of defense organization to reflect strategic purposes. At the broadest level, most strategists would agree that the United States has three major strategic purposes: strategic deterrence, that is, to deter nuclear attacks on the United States and its allies, and to limit the damage from such attacks should they occur; NATO defense, that is, to deter and, if necessary, to defeat an attack on European allies; and regional defense, that is, to be capable of projecting the forces necessary to defend vital U.S. interests in East Asia, the Middle East and Persian Gulf, and the Western Hemisphere.

The most striking deficiency in U.S. defense organization today is the absence of any single official or office in the Pentagon with overall responsibility for any one of these strategic missions—and *only* for that mission. Individual officials and organizations are responsible for parts of each of these missions; other officials, such as the Chairman of the JCS and the Undersecretary for Policy, have a general responsibility for all these missions. The Secretary of Defense knows where to turn when he wants the individual officials responsible for the Air Force or the Marine Corps, for research and development or intelligence, for manpower or the budget. But where does he find an official with overall and exclusive responsibility for strategic deterrence? There is none. Nor is there any single official responsible for NATO defense or for force projection in the Third World. These are precisely the major strategic purposes of American defense policy, and they are virtually the only important interests in defense that are not represented in the defense organization.

How can this failure to represent strategic purpose in defense organization be remedied? There are three possible ways. One would be to restructure the services so as to make service interest coincide with strategic mission. In effect, this would involve a change in service roles and missions, as defined in the Key West Agreement of 1948, so as to define the competence of the services in terms of mission rather than in terms of element. Two proposals along these lines were advanced

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in 1983.[4] In general, they propose that the Air Force become the strategic deterrence force. It would lose its responsibilities for tactical air and airlift, but it would gain control of ballistic missile submarines and everything relating to ballistic missile defenses. The Army would be dedicated exclusively to land war and would gain control of everything necessary for the successful prosecution of land war, including tactical air, air lift, and sea lift. The Navy would lose its sea lift and ballistic missile submarines, but would keep everything else dedicated to the conduct of war at sea, including the Marine Corps, since amphibious operations cannot be separated from war at sea.

These changes, it is argued, would mean that the Air Force would no longer necessarily rule out basing MX missiles on small coastal submarines, since it would be assured that those submarines would be under its control rather than the Navy's. Similarly, the Army could greatly reduce its expensive and dubiously effective efforts to provide close air support by helicopters and instead purchase the cheaper and more effective fixed-wing planes which the Key West Agreement now bars it from procuring.

Undoubtedly, such a realignment of service roles and missions would produce program and weapon choices better suited to serve U.S. strategic purposes. There are, however, several problems with this proposal. The division of service responsibilities among strategic deterrence, ground war, and air war does not entirely relate services to missions. Indeed, it mixes purposive (strategic deterrence) and elemental (ground, sea) definitions of service responsibility. Undoubtedly the Army would be primarily oriented to European defense and the Navy to sea control and force projection. One key element of European defense, however, is the ability of the United States to mobilize and transport personnel and materiel to Europe in the event of conflict. The Navy would have to protect them against Soviet submarines and aircraft. Yet the decision as to what resources would be devoted to this NATO mission would be made, not by someone with overall responsibility for European defense, but by someone who balanced this need against the need to project forces elsewhere. The Navy's decision on this issue might or might not be congruent with the Army's decision on its needs for reinforcement.

Another major difficulty of the service-restructuring solution is that the political problems involved in attempting to induce any of the services to surrender long-held responsibilities, even though secondary

[4] John L. Byron, "Reorganization of the U.S. Armed Forces," *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings* 109 (Jan. 1983): 68-75; Morton H. Halperin and David Halperin, "The Key West Key," *Foreign Policy* 53 (Winter 1983-84): 114-130.

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ones, are enormous. The agreement worked out at Key West is in many respects arbitrary. To reopen it, however, would be to shake up a hornet's nest of fears, animosities, and service lobbying that would effectively preclude serious consideration of other defense issues for some period of time.

A second way that has been proposed to relate strategic purpose to defense organization has been to enhance the role of the unified and specified commands and of the Chairman of the JCS as their spokesman. This proposal has received fairly widespread support. The CINCs, after all, are the officials who are responsible for using the military forces to achieve U.S. strategic purposes. Very modest steps to enhance their role in program determination and resource allocation have been taken under both Carter and Reagan, and the CINCs now appear semi-annually before the Defense Resources Board to present their needs.

Enhancement of the role of the CINCs undoubtedly would be useful. At the same time, however, it is not clear that such a move would satisfactorily close the gap between strategic purpose and defense organization. Many of the unified and specified commands are little more than service creatures and service fronts. Strengthening them will not create a strategic counterpoise to service interests. In addition, two or more commands contribute to each of the three major U.S. strategic purposes and hence no single CINC can represent the total needs of any such purpose. The physical location of the CINCs outside of—often at great distance from—Washington also makes it difficult for them to play a sustained role in the never-ending program-determination and resource-allocation process. Presumably the Chairman of the JCS might, as many suggest, attempt to articulate their needs in Washington. As we have noted, the CINCs do share an interest in readiness which often puts them at odds with the services on such issues as maintenance, spare parts, joint exercises, and other issues. On major resource allocation issues, however, the divisions among the CINCs will be as deep as those among the services. It is not clear how the Chairman can represent the views of the CINCs when those views can and must conflict with each other.

Undersecretaries for strategic missions

Service restructuring is thus probably impossible. An enhancement of the role of the CINCs would be only partially effective. A third, more promising, approach would be *to create at the highest level in the Defense department offices concerned with each major strategic mission*. Such offices could be headed by undersecretaries of defense,

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who would replace and assume the functions now associated with the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy. Each such undersecretary would have the responsibility to ensure that the United States has military forces constituted, organized, trained, equipped, and deployed to carry out the mission for which he is responsible. Each undersecretary would thus supervise, direct, and coordinate all those activities in the Defense department primarily related to his strategic purpose. These would include both force development and operational planning. He would be the principal civilian advisor to the Secretary of Defense for everything connected with his mission, including budget allocations.

Each undersecretary should have general supervisory responsibility for the unified and specified commands relevant to his mission. He would also be their spokesman in the process of force development and resource allocation. It would be up to him to review the CINCs' statements of their requirements and make recommendations concerning their needs to the Secretary of Defense. Once he received guidance from the Secretary as to the resources that would be available to support his mission, it would then be up to the undersecretary to determine the most effective allocation of those resources among the various forces, programs, and weapons. Given limited resources, each undersecretary would have an interest in producing the combination of forces and programs that would most effectively and most efficiently meet the needs of his mission. The services and other Defense department agencies would, correspondingly, have interests in demonstrating that their programs would meet those needs more effectively and efficiently than those of the other services. Unproductive interservice rivalry over ownership of programs and functions would be replaced by a more productive rivalry to develop the best programs and weapons to meet the key strategic needs of the nation.

The responsibilities of individual undersecretaries might be defined in a variety of ways. The Undersecretary for Strategic Deterrence would presumably have authority over all strategic offensive and defensive forces and capabilities. He would also be responsible for offensive, defensive, and intelligence missions in space. He would have supervisory but not command authority over the Strategic Air Command (SAC), the Aerospace Defense Command, and Navy SLBM forces, and he would be the spokesman for their requirements in the process of force development and resource allocation. He would be the Defense department's person on strategic arms limitation negotiations.

The Undersecretary for North Atlantic and European Defense would be generally responsible for everything connected with NATO, including U.S. conventional forces allocated to that purpose, theater nuclear

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forces, and the naval forces designed to secure control of the North Atlantic. He would exercise supervisory authority over, and be the spokesman for the requirements of, the European and Atlantic commands. He would also be in charge of mobilization planning, since that process is driven by the requirements of a general war in Europe. He would be responsible for developing the Defense department position for negotiations on nuclear weapons and conventional forces in Europe. He would share responsibility for antisubmarine warfare with the Undersecretary for Strategic Deterrence.

The Undersecretary for Regional Defense and Force Projection would be generally responsible for planning and preparations for military contingencies in East Asia, the Middle East and Persian Gulf, Latin America, and other Third World areas. He would have supervisory authority over and be the spokesmen for the requirements of the Pacific, Central (Indian Ocean-Persian Gulf), Southern (Latin America), and Readiness Commands. He would coordinate military assistance programs for the countries in these areas. He would also have general responsibility for counterinsurgency and special operations. He would share responsibility for mobility capabilities with the undersecretary for NATO affairs.

The undersecretaries clearly would compete with each other for resources to perform their missions. Unlike current interservice competition, however, where only service interests are at stake, this competition would involve critical issues of priority among central strategic missions. The differences among them would have to be resolved by the Secretary of Defense in meeting with them, the Deputy Secretary, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. That six-man group would, in effect, be the top policy-making body in the Pentagon.

One of the most frequently voiced criticisms of the Office of the Secretary of Defense has been that its officials tend to get involved in administrative detail, which should properly be left to the services or other agencies, and attempt to "micromanage" the department. This tendency is in large part a result of the gap that exists in the department between strategic purpose and organizational structure. As one expert on governmental organization has observed, *"The failure to group related programs in major purpose agencies inevitably produces a shift of power to the policy and managerial offices grouped around the President."*[5] This is equally true within the Defense department, and the absence of "major purpose agencies" within the department has pro-

[5] Alan L. Dean, "General Propositions of Organizational Design," in Peter Szanton, ed., *Federal Reorganization: What Have We Learned?* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1981), p. 138.

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moted the involvement of the Office of the Secretary of Defense in administration and management. Creation of major purpose agencies related to strategic missions would encourage the decentralization of authority and would tend to focus attention on the major strategic issues—which would be at stake among the undersecretaries—instead of on administrative details.

Movement in this direction would threaten neither the existence nor the roles and missions of the services. It would encourage the services to compete with each other in a more constructive fashion and would reward those services that came up with the most effective and least expensive programs to achieve strategic missions. The services would continue to do all that they do today, but their activities would be directed to a different mix of goals than they currently are.

In some measure, the creation of the three mission offices and undersecretaries recommended here would follow naturally from developments already under way in the department. During the early years of the Carter administration, the Secretary of Defense had an Advisor for NATO Affairs. In the Reagan administration, the Assistant Secretary for International Security Affairs has generally been responsible for matters concerning the Third World, while the Assistant Secretary for International Security Policy has handled NATO matters, strategic forces, and arms control negotiations. Neither of these officials, however, has had the statutory authority or the defined responsibilities to carry out the crucial duties in force development which the proposed undersecretaries would discharge. In the Defense department, assistant secretaries simply do not have the status and clout required for this task. Responsible as they should be for achieving the Defense department's major strategic purposes, these officials need to be undersecretaries and second only to the Secretary and his deputy in their authority and position within the department. In fact and in perception, they need to be mission "czars."

Combat command

The need for unity of command was the dominant theme of the Defense Reorganization Act of 1958. Combat forces, President Eisenhower argued, must be "organized into unified commands . . . singly led and prepared to fight as one, regardless of service." The act attempted to accomplish this end through a radical break with the past. Before 1958, "unified" commands had existed, but, with the notable exception of Eisenhower's command in Europe, these commands were largely identified with individual services, even when forces from sev-

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eral services were assigned to them. After World War II, a service department served as the "executive agent" for each unified command, linking it to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of Defense. The 1958 act seemed to change this pattern drastically. Unified or specified commands would be directly under the command of the President and the Secretary of Defense; they would, at least in theory, have no direct ties with particular services; and the services would have no responsibility for the conduct of military operations.

The unification of command over land, air, and sea elements was achieved, however, only by accepting two other critical distinctions in military organization. The services were to be the *providers* of military forces: that is, they were to recruit, train, equip, and generally prepare military forces for combat. These forces would then be turned over to the unified and specified commands who would be the *users* of military force. They would plan for and actually direct the use of those forces in combat. There would be a balanced pattern of departmental organization, with a clear separation between an administrative hierarchy and a military command hierarchy. Under the 1958 act, the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps thus would not fight wars; the unified and specified commands would fight wars. By removing the services in theory from military operations, the United States adopted an organizational pattern which, among major powers, it shares only with the Federal Republic of Germany (a very special case, because all its combat forces are under the operational command of NATO). The United States is thus almost alone in attempting to exclude its military services entirely from the conduct of military operations and relegate them entirely to supporting roles.

To the distinction between provider and user, the 1958 act also added another and more troublesome distinction, that between operational command and administrative command. Conceivably, once a military service had organized and equipped a military unit (ship, division, air wing) it could have turned full authority for that unit over to the unified command to which it was assigned—the unit only returning to service control when, for one reason or another, it was felt necessary fundamentally to reconstitute, retrain, or re-equip it. Short of this, however, it would be under the full command in all dimensions of the unified commander. The 1958 act, however, did not establish this system. Instead it provided that the CINC would have "full operational command" of the forces assigned to him, while the services would be "responsible for the administration" of those forces. The services have control over discipline, personnel, training, and logistics. The act thus provided for unified command of land, sea, and air forces

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at the expense of a divided command over the individual land, sea, and air components. Each subordinate component commander in a unified command is responsible to the CINC of his command on operational matters and to the chief of his service for everything else, which, in peacetime, is almost everything of importance.

The division decreed in the act between operational and administrative command in effect undermines the division of responsibilities between provider and user that was designed to ensure unity of command. The power of the CINCs over their service components remains highly constrained and limited. In 1970 the Blue Ribbon Defense Panel argued that the intent of the earlier reforms had been vitiated: "Despite the establishment of the unified command concept in the Defense Reorganization Act of 1958, as requested by President Eisenhower, the relationship and relative authority beweeen the Unified Commander and the component commander, and between the component commander and his Military Department, remain substantially unchanged." Eight years later another official study made a similar comment. The CINCs "have limited power to influence the capability of the forces assigned to them. . . . The CINCs' forces are trained and equipped by their parent Services, who control the flow of men, money, and materiel to the CINC's components. The Services (and the components) thus have the major influence on both the structure and the readiness of the forces for which the CINC is responsible." As a result, the CINCs have to negotiate with their component commanders. Their only real power is the power of persuasion; they have only limited influence over what goes on in their service components.[6] The component commanders clearly exercise preponderant control over the combat forces assigned to unified commands. Unified commands, in short, are not truly unified.

The unified commands are also not truly unified in yet another sense. The 1958 act ended the system whereby a service department served as "executive agent" for each unified command. It could not and did not, however, end the identification of particular commands with particular services. The three specified commands—Strategic Air Command, Aerospace Defense Command, and Military Airlift Command—are composed entirely of Air Force units and are commanded by Air

[6] Blue Ribbon Defense Panel, *Report*, p. 50; Richard C. Steadman, *Report to the Secretary of Defense on the National Military Command Structure* (Washington, D.C.: July 1978), p. 16; see also John H. Cushman, *Command and Control of Theater Forces: Adequacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University, Center for Information Policy Research, Program on Information Resources Policy, 1983), pp. 3-58. Here and elsewhere I have drawn heavily on General Cushman's penetrating analysis of the history and problems of the unified commands.

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Force officers. The Pacific and Atlantic Commands are always commanded by naval officers. The European, Southern, and Readiness Commands have (with one brief exception) been under Army command. The Central Command, which developed out of the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force (commanded by a Marine), is now commanded by an Army officer.

At least some of the designated unified commands are more unified in theory than in practice. The Atlantic Command has no Army or Air Force components regularly assigned to it. Except for three ships in the Persian Gulf, no Navy or Marine Corps units are regularly assigned to the Readiness Command or to the Central Command. Army units do exist in the Pacific Command, most notably in Korea, but those are part of a subunified command headed by an Army general. The Southern Command includes modest Army and only minuscule Air Force and Navy forces. This leaves the European Command, with substantial forces from all service departments, as the only truly comprehensive unified command. Apart from the European Command, almost no naval forces are under the command of Army or Air Force officers, and only in the Pacific Command are significant Army and Air Force units under a naval CINC—and that is mitigated through the device of the subunified command. Despite Eisenhower's intentions and the 1958 act, in most cases the operational chain of command, as well as the administrative one, remains a service chain of command. To the extent a unified command is unified, it is not a command, because of the limited control of the CINC over components from other services. To the extent that a unified command is a command, it is not unified, because its forces come exclusively or overwhelmingly from a single service.

Such is the system in peacetime. The situation in war or crisis, when military forces have to be deployed and used, is not substantially different, except that, invariably, ad hoc arrangements have to be devised. In developing such command arrangements for military operations, the service members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff are driven by two urges. First, each chief wants his service to have a significant role in the operation. Second, each chief is under pressure to minimize the extent to which forces from his service are under the command of someone from another service. The efforts to harmonize these two principles can often lead to complex, uncertain, and fragmented command relationships. The Vietnam War, for instance, occurred within the geographical area assigned to the Navy-headed Pacific Command. Once significant Army forces were deployed to Vietnam, however, a subunified command, MACV, headed by an Army general, was created.

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In due course, Marine units were also assigned to Vietnam, and what was in effect a separate sub-subunified command was created for them in the northern provinces of South Vietnam. MACV, however, did not command the carrier task forces in the South China Sea or the B-52 bombers operating from Guam, both of which played significant roles in the air war. As a result, Vietnam was, as General Jones observes:

> perhaps our worst example of confused objectives and unclear responsibilities, both in Washington and in the field. Each service, instead of integrating efforts with the others, considered Vietnam its own war and sought to carve out a large mission for itself. For example, each fought its own air war, agreeing only to limited measures for a coordinated effort. . . . Lack of integration persisted right through the 1975 evacuation of Saigon—when responsibility was split between two separate commands, one on land and one at sea; each of these set a different "H-hour," which caused confusion and delays.[7]

Comparable patterns have existed in smaller operations. Grenada is a relatively small island; but during the invasion, command over ground forces was divided between Marine and Army officers. In the Iran rescue mission, as the official Pentagon study concluded, command and control were "excellent at the upper echelons, but became more tenuous and fragile at intermediate levels." Within the Joint Task Force that had been created for this operation, command relationships "were not clearly emphasized in some cases and were susceptible to misunderstandings under pressure." Among other things, during preparation for the mission it was unclear as to whether a Marine or Air Force officer was in charge of training the helicopter units that were to undertake the rescue.[8]

The existing unified and specified commands are organized in terms of both mission and geographical areas. The mission commands, however, as is the case most notably with SAC, do not necessarily include all the major forces that are dedicated to that mission, while the geographical commands, on the other hand, do have full responsibility for their entire geographical area. It is difficult to see the logic that divides command of U.S. strategic retaliatory forces among four separate commands (Strategic Air, Atlantic, Pacific, European) and yet established a single command for all U.S. forces from the Golden Gate to the Persian Gulf. Geographically defined commands, oriented toward a particular area, service, or mission, may not be well suited to plan for and carry out operations that are at the margin of their responsibilities.

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[7] David C. Jones, "What's Wrong with Our Defense Establishment," *New York Times Magazine* (November 7, 1982): 70.

[8] Special Operations Review Group, "Report on the Iranian Rescue Mission," in *Aviation Week & Space Technology* 113 (September 15, 1980): 63-70.

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Thirteen years before the invasion of Grenada, the Blue Ribbon Defense Panel argued that the Atlantic Command "tends to be oriented toward a general war maritime role as distinguished from a perhaps more probable contingency involving land operations in its geographical area of responsibility." Nor is it surprising that the Long Commission on the terrorist bombing of the Marines at Beirut airport should conclude that there was "a lack of systematic and aggressive chain of command attention" to the Marines' anti-terrorist security measures by European Command headquarters.[9] The current structure of unified and specified commands thus often tends to unify things that should not be unified and to divide things that should be under a single command.

The deficiencies in the command of combat forces will not be corrected by any single panacea. A wide variety of individual corrrective actions is desirable. First, however, it is necessary to ask: What purposes is unity of command meant to serve? There are really two: cooperation and fungibility. Cooperation is served when all military forces assigned to a particular mission are under a single command. Fungibility is served when all military forces of a particular type are under a single command. The needs of cooperation and fungibility often conflict with each other, as well as with other important values in military operations. In a complex modern military establishment, as a result, absolute unity of command is virtually impossible to achieve. Unifying military forces along one dimension will create disunities along another. Some form of divided command will exist in almost all circumstances; the problem is to identify that form of division that is least injurious to the accomplishment of the mission at hand.

Mission commands, not area commands

The 1958 act was based on the absolute distinction between the provider-administrative role of the services and the user-operational role of the combat commands. This has, however, been a distinction impossible to maintain in practice. Much of the time, this effort at divorce is unnecessary and dysfunctional. Where there are operational missions that should be carried out with forces from a single service, no reason exists not to assign responsibility for that mission to the service. The assumption underlying the 1958 act—that all operational forces should be removed from the services—needs to be re-examined,

[9] Blue Ribbon Defense Panel, *Report*, p. 48; *Report of DOD Commission on Beirut International Airport Terrorist Act, October 23, 1983* (20 December 1983), p. 55.

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particularly since in the specified commands and many "unified" commands they have never in fact been divorced. Conceivably, the United States might do well to follow a pattern comparable to that of the Soviets, in which in some cases the services are responsible for operational missions and in other cases they are not.

In keeping with this general approach, unified and specified commands should normally be organized in terms of mission, not area, and the scope of a command should be extended to all forces directly relevant to its mission. The Strategic Air Command, for instance, should be converted into a strategic retaliatory command incorporating the ballistic missile submarines that are now assigned to three other commands. In keeping with the recommendations of various groups, the Military Airlift Command might also be changed into a Logistics Command including sealift and related activities as well as airlift. Both of these commands would thus become unified rather than specified commands and should be commanded by Navy admirals as well as by Air Force generals. The Atlantic Command, on the other hand, should be converted into a purely naval Atlantic Sea Control Command, with that as its only mission. Responsibility for force projection and amphibious operations in countries bordering the Atlantic, on the other hand, should be transferred to the Readiness or Southern Commands. There is also little logic in the writ of the European Command extending over all of Africa and a good part of the Middle East. The European Command should be directed to the defense of Europe. Given the importance of the area, a separate Eastern Mediterranean-Levantine Command would clearly seem to be called for. In general, the scope of geographical commands should be limited to areas within which one mission is overwhelmingly dominant.

In some circumstances, services can serve strategic needs more directly. In other circumstances, however, the needs of cooperation will undoubtedly require the assignment of substantial forces from two or more services to a unified command which can and should be divorced from the services. In such commands, the position of CINC should, like the chairmanship of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, normally be rotated among the participating services. The circumstances that require the creation of a unified command also require that such a command not be the preserve of any particular service. In addition, the CINCs of those commands should have greatly enhanced authority over the forces assigned to them. It is difficult to see what is gained by the services' retaining jurisdiction over such matters as administration, discipline, unit training, and logistics. The unified commander has the responsibility to ensure that the forces under his command are ready to fight

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and to fight successfully. He should be given the authority commensurate with that responsibility, including the authority to assign officers as he sees fit and to relieve them from command when he deems that necessary.

In some cases, thus, the artificial distinction between operational command and administrative command can be broken down by giving operational as well as administrative command to the services. In other cases, as in Europe, for instance, it can and should be broken down by giving administrative as well as operational command to the CINCs. In all cases, the central need is to recognize that no particular form of unity of command is universally relevant and that the choice in particular circumstances should reflect the mission to be accomplished and the nature of the forces required for that mission.

Subordinating the service viewpoint

Militarism has been defined as that "doctrine or system" that, among other things, exalts "an institutional structure—the military establishment" and "accords primacy in state and society to the armed forces."[10] In somewhat parallel fashion, servicism is the doctrine or system that exalts the individual military service and accords it primacy in the military establishment. The individual military services are and will remain indispensable elements in that establishment. Service interests, service needs, and service power, however, have dominated U.S. defense structure, warping and frustrating efforts to establish rational systems of strategic planning, force development, and combat command. The result is, inevitably, an undesirable weakening of the collective military contribution in these areas. In the United States, the military view, as Clausewitz recommended, is kept subordinate to the political view. The service view should, in a similar manner, be kept subordinate to the military view.

The evils of servicism cannot be remedied, however, by any single organizational reform. A variety of measures is needed. The principal organizational proposals suggested in this essay involve three different approaches: in strategic planning, strengthen the authority of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; in force development, create mission undersecretaries to represent the basic strategic purposes; and in combat command, orient commands to missions rather than geography, assigning responsibility for some to the services and enhancing the command authority of the CINCs of the others. Changes along these

[10] Laurence I. Radway, "Militarism," in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (New York: Macmillan and Free Press, 1968), vol. 10, p. 300.

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lines clearly will not solve all the organizational problems of the U.S. defense establishment.

Together, however, they will reinforce each other in elevating military needs over service interests, and in bringing defense organization more into line with strategic purpose. In its current incarnation, the U.S. defense establishment dates from World War II. It is middle-aged and it shows many of the characteristics of middle age. Like any large bureaucratic structure, it has tended to become top-heavy, overweight, sluggish, and loaded down with activities, offices, installations, and personnel, which may once have been vital to its functioning, but no longer are. So long as there is no shortage of resources for defense, such excrescences can be tolerated. Real constraints on defense will, however, almost inevitably be the dominant theme of the second half of the 1980s. To ensure that priority goes to what is needed for the wars the United States is most likely to fight, or most needs to deter, requires an effective and coherent military voice in the formulation of national strategy, the allocation of resources to forces, programs, and weapons so as rationally to serve strategic purposes, and unified command structures for combat forces relevant to the missions they are to perform. If service needs and service perspectives continue to prevail over national needs and national perspectives, the United States will face grave difficulties meeting future challenges to its vital interests.

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What the reserves can—and can't—do

PHILIP GOLD

A military force is not an abstraction, nor does it spring into existence *ex nihilo*. A military force is the product of three interlocking sets of factors: national objectives, available forms of military power, and political constraints upon the use of that power. A military force is built from the "top down," in the sense that its overall structure is (or should be) determined by the imperatives of national survival and strategy. It is also built from the "bottom up," in the sense that its components must utilize certain weapons, technologies, and human beings, while forgoing others. And finally, a military force is built from the "outside in," shaped (in democracies, at least) as much by non-military factors as by strategies and weapons and possible foes.

In the broadest sense, there are only two kinds of national military force. A territorial defense force does precisely that: It operates on and around its national borders in order to deter or defeat such threats as may approach. It usually knows where and against whom it will fight. Its troops are, more often than not, recruited by conscription, and its regular forces are, more often than not, buttressed by sizable reserves. Such massive augmentation is militarily possible because territorial defense forces normally have the benefit of interior lines of communication and, in most cases, do not have to travel very far to fight. The

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massive use of reserves is politically possible because territorial defense forces exist to fulfill an unambiguous, even sacrosanct mission: the preservation of territorial sovereignty. Israel, Switzerland, the Federal Republic of Germany, France, and Sweden provide examples of the efficacy of such forces.

Alternatively, a force may be expeditionary in nature: that is, designed to fight away from home. Such forces are usually designed for many contingencies in widely different areas. Since an expeditionary force must travel in order to fight, it requires great investments in strategic lift, and in air and sea control assets. Its logistical problems tend to be far greater, its manpower constraints more severe—especially in the short-to-no-notice contingencies exemplified by the Falklands, Grenada, and some UN peace-keeping missions. For these reasons, expeditionary forces tend to rely upon professional, highly trained, long-service manpower. They are forces-in-being, designed to be deployed as instruments of national policy under circumstances with potentially ambiguous public support.

By the grace of God and geopolitics, the United States does not fight on its own soil. Its forces are therefore, by definition, expeditionary—which means, given modern military realities, that they are required to perform almost instantly. These forces are currently committed, or slated for commitment, across the planet: Central Europe, the Middle East and Southwest Asia, Korea, the Western Hemisphere—almost anywhere. No nation in history has ever attempted to fulfill such an array of commitments.

Nor has any done so less wisely—at least in terms of its manpower policies. It is often remarked that the national unwillingness to renew peacetime conscription severely limits American military capability. This is true, for in the "come-as-you-are" wars of the recent past and probable future, there will be no time for the leisurely mobilizations that have characterized America's twentieth-century wars; no time to gear up Selective Service and provide inductees the 90 days' training required by law before they can be sent into combat; no time to wait while the ACLU and other kindred souls drag everything related to manpower through the courts. The wars of the future will, most probably, be fought by the forces-in-being—active and reserve—at their start.

The Department of Defense, of course, recognizes this fact. And, for a decade now, it has struggled with the conundrum of maintaining a global expeditionary force by voluntary inducements alone. As part of the answer, over a decade ago the Pentagon adopted what has come to be known as the "Total Force" policy: the doctrine that part-time

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reserve forces—units, individuals, equipment—constitute the functional equivalent of their full-time regular counterparts for purposes of planning and employment. By this reckoning, there is no fundamental difference between an officer in the reserves, with a full-time civilian job, and an officer on active duty at an American base overseas. They are essentially interchangeable parts of a Total Force.

In a sense, the Total Force policy represents the quintessential American response to military manpower needs, at least in theory. The tradition of the part-time citizen-soldier runs deep; the Minuteman, in concept if not in fact, has always been viewed as an integral and crucial component of the national defense. Considered this way, then, the Total Force policy represents perhaps nothing so much as a return to a practice now centuries old: reliance on a part-time citizen-soldiery.

Or does it? Can reservists, given the unprecedented complexity of modern warfare, be expected to acquire and retain the necessary skills for short-notice mobilization and expeditionary deployment across the globe? And if they can, are there enough of them? And if there are, could any President even call them up under conditions of less than complete public support—conditions how likely to obtain? And could elected representatives tolerate the political costs of long-term mobilization—and mass casualties—among their constituents?

The answer, in each case, would seem to be *no*. The Total Force policy is dangerously flawed. It is flawed from the "top down," in that no nation that expects to maintain global expeditionary commitments can successfully do so with a part-time soldiery. It is flawed from the "bottom up," in that weekend warriors cannot (with some notable exceptions) be expected to maintain the necessary fitness and proficiency. And it is flawed from the "outside in," for the political constraints upon massive reserve employment would seem to be prohibitive. Or, to put it another way: Absent the reintroduction of conscription, or American strategic disengagement from most of the globe, the Total Force policy will remain, at best, a convenient self-delusion, and at worst a prelude to national disaster.

The ideal of the citizen-soldier

A brief historical review reveals not only the inherent limitations of part-time forces—limitations which have proved remarkably constant through the centuries—but also the contours of the American understanding of citizen obligation and service: an understanding which, by and large (and despite Vietnam) has also remained the same.

The notion that every citizen (every male citizen, at any rate) owes

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military service *for home defense and under certain conditions* forms one of the more venerable parts of the Anglo-Saxon heritage. For centuries prior to the colonization of the New World, Englishmen had been accustomed to the idea of the citizen's military obligation. The archaic Anglo-Saxon *fyrd* demanded the services of every freeman for military training and defense of the realm—a principle subsequently codified in Henry II's *Assize of Arms* (1181), Edward I's *Statute of Winchester* (1285), and Elizabeth I's *Instructions for General Muster* (1572). By the latter-16th century, a formally structured national militia had emerged, with royally appointed lord-lieutenants responsible for the supervision and training of local units; these units, however, in weaponry and rank structure, more often reflected local economic and social realities than military needs.

Not surprisingly, the English militia neither saw much action nor proved itself amenable to extensive and rigorous training. Intended primarily for home defense, militia were hardly ever employed beyond the borders of the realm; it was understood that extended expeditionary campaigning required long-service professionals, not part-time, ill-equipped, undisciplined fellows loath to leave home for more than a few days. But the citizen-soldier ideal remained politically significant well into the 18th century, for two reasons. First, nearly all Englishmen, whatever their political tendencies, objected to the cost and potential dangers of a large, Continental-style standing army—especially on an island not easily invaded. And second, at least according to the Whig canon, an armed citizenry provided a final check upon possible royal usurpation of the people's prerogatives and rights. As a contemporary pamphleteer, James Harrington, put it in his influential *Oceana*, "Men accustomed unto their arms and their liberties will never endure the yoke."

And it was this ideal, and this militia system, that the colonists brought to the New World. In the beginning, the system made sense. Especially in the early years of any colony's existence, the imperatives of survival dictated that every man bear arms; indeed, prior to the Revolution, every colony (save Quaker Pennsylvania) passed obligatory militia service laws.

In fact, though, the system never quite worked. As each colony grew more stable, enforcement waned (as it had in England), and numerous exemptions and commutations crept into the laws. Further, actual experience against the French and the Indians indicated that when extended or distant campaigning was required, the propertied citizens on the militia rolls proved less expendable (and less effective) than such lower-class denizens as might be tempted by bounties or the lure of

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loot. Thus by the eve of the Revolution, a curious system had developed: a "standing militia" theoretically composed of all eligible males, from which could be drawn individual volunteers (and occasionally whole units) for specific operations—a citizen-soldiery whose effectiveness normally diminished in direct proportion to its time and distance away from home.[1]

With the coming of the Revolution, the states naturally attempted to revitalize their militias. Results were mixed, at best. Throughout the war, militia performance ranged from the occasionally gallant to the normally reprehensible, prompting General Washington's oft-quoted remark that "to place any dependence on Militia is, assuredly, resting on a broken staff," and Alexander Hamilton's lament in the *Federalist* that "dependence on Militia should have cost us our independence." This dismal record notwithstanding, both the Constitution and the Militia Act of 1792 decreed citizen-soldiery to be the mainstay of national defense. Under this settlement, there would be a small standing army, adequate for policing the frontier and maintaining the arsenals, but little else; the bulk of the nation's manpower would reside in the state militias, subject to federal oversight (never really enforced) and occasional mobilizations to suppress disorder, insurrection, and invasion.

For a century, the system failed (except as an agent of domestic order). The federal government rarely exercised effective supervision, and such units as saw service in the wars of the nineteenth century performed, as a rule, unsatisfactorily. Not until the Dick Act of 1903 did the federal government begin to assume real control over the various state militias—now known, generically, as the National Guard.

Two world wars produced rather different results. Mass mobilization via popularly accepted conscription gave new life to the notions of obligation and citizen service. In both wars, the National Guard was federalized and performed, by and large, well—albeit not without extensive post-federalization training, nor without vitriolic disputes between regular and Guard officers over command, use of Guard units, and maintenance of unit identity and integrity. (The regulars usually won.) Further, this period also witnessed the establishment of reserve structures for each of the armed services, independent of Guard and state ties.

Between the end of World War II and the advent of the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) in 1973, American experience with reserves was mixed. For most of this period, the Guard and service reserves had no difficulty

[1] See John K. Mahon, *History of the Militia and National Guard* (New York: Macmillan, 1983).

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attracting recruits—especially since membership entitled the weekend warrior to exemption from the active-duty draft. But on the three occasions when reserves were mobilized in significant numbers, results were poor. During the 1950 Korean mobilization, chaos reigned. Non-drilling World War II veterans were called as individual replacements ahead of drilling non-veterans, a clear and politically costly inequity. Of the eight National Guard divisions ultimately mobilized, only two saw combat, and these required over a year's post-federalization training. Reservists mobilized during the 1961 Berlin crisis also took as much as a year to achieve satisfactory combat readiness. And the 37,000 reservists called during the token activation following the Tet offensive in 1968 required about seven months.[2] In all these cases, individuals—those who showed up—proved grievously deficient in skills; units lacked manpower, equipment, and cohesion; and the political costs of the disruption of private lives and local communities were often exorbitant. The history, then, of the American experiment with citizen-soldiery prior to the AVF is one of an ongoing and wholly unjustifiable faith in the virtues and competence of part-time warriors.

The reserve establishment today

But in fact, something *has* changed. Never before has a global power been so dependent on part-time warriors to meet its expeditionary commitments, a dependency that cuts across the entire spectrum of military activity. To show this, it is necessary to consider three aspects of the situation: the reserve establishment itself; the inherent advantages and disadvantages of reserves; and how the reserves fit into American force structure and expeditionary planning.

The reserve establishment itself is a complex, rather amorphous structure, little known to those outside of, or unaffected by, its workings. The establishment may best be viewed as a kind of matrix consisting of two parts—components and categories—with many subdivisions in each.

Components refers to the seven "branches" of the reserve structure: Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army Reserve, Naval Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Coast Guard Reserve (see Table I). Of these seven, the last five belong exclusively to their parent services. The Army and Air National Guards belong to

[2] Warren W. Lenhart, *The Mix of United States Active and Reserve Forces* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 1983), pp. 27-8. See also Martin Binkin, *U.S. Reserve Forces: The Problem of the Weekend Warrior* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1976).

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TABLE I: *Selected Reserve Strength by Component (end of Fiscal Year; numbers in thousands)*[1]

COMPONENT	FY 1982 (actual)	FY 1983 (estimate)
Army National Guard	407.6	417.0
Army Reserves	256.7	268.5
Naval Reserves	93.9	105.8
Marine Corps Reserves	40.5	42.6
Air National Guard	100.7	101.8
Air Force Reserves	64.4	66.6
Total	963.8	1002.3

[1] Source: "Statement of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower, Reserve Affairs, and Logistics, Dr. Lawrence J. Korb," *Hearings before the Subcommittee on Military Personnel and Compensation*, House Armed Services Committee, U.S. Congress (Washington, D.C.: Mimeographed release, February 24, 1983), p. 32.

their respective states as well as to the Departments of the Army and Air Force. In all seven cases, units are based in many localities around the country.

Categories refers to the organization of personnel within the reserves, which in turn determines mobilization status. The (presumably) immediately-mobilizable portion of the establishment is the Ready Reserve, which is divided into two subcategories: the Selected Reserve, consisting of organized units that drill together, and the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) containing non-drilling individuals with prior active or reserve service and residual contract obligations. Thus, for example, the Marine Corps Ready Reserve consists of the Selected Reserve (units) and the IRR (pre-trained individual replacements).

Although the Ready Reserve constitutes the bulk of the total, two other categories exist: the Standby Reserve, consisting of individuals who have completed their military obligation and have chosen not to volunteer for the Selected Reserve or remain in the IRR; and the Retired Reserve, consisting (logically enough) of retired members of the services.

In other words, each of the seven reserve components consists of four categories: Selected, Individual, Standby, and Retired. Of these four, only Selected and Individual—the Ready Reserve—provide significant mobilization assets (Table II).

Reserves may be called up for active duty in several ways. Section 673 (b) of Title 10, United States Code, authorizes the President to mobilize as many as 100,000 members of the Selected Reserve (the so-called "100,000 Call-Up") for 90 days without a prior declaration of emergency or war. National Guardsmen may be called for up to 24 months after a declaration of emergency ("Federalization of the Guard"). And Section 671 of Title 10 authorizes Presidential mobilization of up

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TABLE II: *Individual Ready Reserve Strength by Component (end of Fiscal Year; numbers in thousands)*[1]

COMPONENT	FY 1982 (actual)	FY 1983 (estimate)
Army[2]	230.0	258.0
Navy	78.0	74.0
Marine Corps	45.0	58.0
Air Force[3]	43.0	37.0
Total	396.0	427.0

[1] Source: *Hearings before the Subcommittee*, p. 36.
[2] Includes National Guard.
[3] Includes Air National Guard.

to one million Ready Reservists (Selected and IRR) for two years upon declaration of emergency or war. Any mobilization beyond these limits requires congressional authorization.

Because of the U.S. Total Force policy, by which the reserves are "equivalent" to active-duty forces in the military's Table of Organization and Equipment, Selected Reserve units comprise *half the non-strategic combat capability and two-thirds of the combat support and combat service support capability of the United States*. (Some specific examples are given in Table III.) This is, to put it simply, a great deal in reserve for a power that plans on fighting anywhere on short notice. What is more, given that it would probably take six months (at best) for the first of any draftees to enter combat, members of the IRR would be the *only* viable source of individual fillers: men and women who would normally learn of their mobilization assignments only on M-Day itself. All in all, then, it is a system seemingly designed to maximize the manpower problems of an expeditionary power.

Advantages and disadvantages of reserves

To question the overall validity of the Total Force policy is not to deny that reserves have utility. They do in fact possess three inherent advantages.

First, they are comparatively cheap (cheap, of course, being a function of what one wishes to purchase). Although the initial costs of procuring comparable regular and reserve units are the same, the reserves do save money in the long run. Lower operating tempos, equipment usage rates, salaries, retirement costs—all combine to render reserve units between 30 and 70 percent less costly than their full-time counterparts. Ground combat units tend to be near the bottom of this range, flying squadrons near the top. In any case, the savings

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TABLE III: *Reserves' Share of Total Combat Capability in Selected Areas, by Reserve Component* [1]

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD:	70% of separate brigades
	63% of infantry battalions
	50% of field artillery battalions
	43% of tank battalions
	43% of mechanized infantry battalions
ARMY RESERVE:	39% of medical units
	27% of engineer battalions
	25% of Special Forces
NAVAL RESERVE:	100% of U.S.-based logistic aircraft
	99% of shipping control organization
	88% of ocean-going minesweepers
AIR NATIONAL GUARD:	65% of strategic interceptors
	53% of tactical reconnaissance
	32% of tactical airlift
	26% of tactical fighters
	70% of combat communications
AIR FORCE RESERVE:	50% of tanker/cargo aircrews
	49% of strategic lift aircrews
	27% of tactical airlift
MARINE CORPS RESERVE:	25% of division/wing strength

[1] Source: U.S. Congress, *Report of the Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, on H.R. 2969 (Department of Defense Authorization Act, 1984)* (Washington, D.C.: Report No. 98-107, May 11, 1983), p. 202.

for an infantry division can be more than a billion dollars per year: perhaps not a major savings in terms of the whole defense budget, but real nonetheless. Of course, it must also be noted that regular units can achieve similar savings by reducing their operating tempos, equipment usage rates, etc. Still, though, reserve units *are* cheaper in terms of annual recurring costs.

Second, reserves provide a convenient means of augmenting scarce military skills (doctors, technicians, interpreters, etc.), and of providing support not required or trainable in peacetime (graves registration, civil affairs, etc.). Further, certain types of units have consistently proved themselves to be combat-ready. Reserve squadrons, for example, routinely outfly their regular counterparts, a happy condition that is the result of a number of factors. First, reserve pilots are normally older and more experienced, and may (due to their civilian employment) actually log *more* flight hours per month than regulars. Second, large numbers of active-duty personnel are assigned to reserve squadrons for aircraft maintenance and routine administration. Third, squadrons tend to be self-contained entities, able to train on their own, an

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advantage not usually found in the ground forces. Within the ground forces, a rule of thumb is "the smaller the unit, the greater the proficiency." Up to battalion level, infantry training tends to be relatively simple; beyond that, the intricacies of combined-arms combat take over.

A final advantage of reserves is that they can easily be used to man the "CONUS rotation base"—the complex of training facilities, recruiting and processing stations, and bases required to maintain and deploy overseas forces. In peacetime, Defense department policy is to use certain state-side assignments as "breathers" between operational tours, in or out of CONUS. In time of war, it would be prudent to use the reserves to run the rotation base, thus freeing professionals to fight; indeed, in a sense, the regulars now manning the rotation base might be viewed as a kind of "full-time IRR."

Balanced against these three advantages—cheapness, skill acquisition, and support—are six major disadvantages. Two are perennial; four pertain to the present moment, and the present policy.

First, training time is limited: one weekend per month and two weeks of Annual Training Duty for units in the Selected Reserve, occasional active duty and refresher courses for members of the IRR. It is simply not reasonable to expect reserves to maintain combat-readiness within these parameters, especially since a varying but large percentage of training time must be given over to administrative requirements, "nuisance" training such as alcohol and drug abuse, lectures on military justice, etc. Further, it is not clear that essential levels of physical fitness and acclimatization can be maintained; daily jogging and racquetball do not prepare one for the stress of combat, regardless of how one scores on standardized physical fitness tests. Nor do maneuvers in Massachusetts offer proper acclimatization for combat in the Persian Gulf. In point of fact (as we have learned from a generation of Israeli experience), true reserve readiness requires at least several times the minimum amount of training. (This is a fact not unknown to many reservists, whose unpaid efforts between drills often elicit from civilian employers the sardonic query: "Well, just who are you working for, anyway?")

Second, reserve equipment is neither as plentiful nor as good as the equipment of the regulars. Traditionally, reserves have trained with "hand-me-downs"—marginal to obsolete equipment, and this in far from adequate quantities. This poses three problems. First, it is axiomatic that one should train with the equipment one will use in combat. But the Army is currently fielding over a dozen new major weapons systems—items which must be integrated into the reserve simultaneously, if reserve units are to function, tactically and logistically, as

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regular equivalents. The money to do so is simply not available. Second, reserve maintenance units should practice on the kinds of equipment they will be responsible for at war; again, budgetary constraints preclude this. And third, it is impossible to provide adequate maintainance for such equipment between drills without the addition of large numbers of full-time support personnel—either regular or active-duty reservists. The people are not available. This means, in short, that reserve equipment receives neither the necessary maintenance nor upgrading. In the past, leisurely mobilization requirements and ample post-mobilization training time made this a secondary problem. The Total Force policy has made it a major one.

Beyond time and equipment limitations, however, lie four problems peculiar to short-notice mobilization. To borrow a cliche from the 1960s: "What if they gave a war and nobody came?" Pentagon planning routinely assumes that about 70 percent of reservists who are called would actually show up on time, ready to go. This is an unconscionably optimistic forecast, but even if true, it means that deploying units from the Selected Reserve (assuming 100 percent pre-mobilization strength) would take 30 percent "casualties" before leaving the armory—not to mention the additional dilemma of non-deployable women. In the IRR, the situation is far worse. As already mentioned, few IRR members know their mobilization assignments, and, on any given day, probably about half the addresses and phone numbers in the IRR data banks are out of date.[3] Further, in both categories, requests for delays, hardship deferments, and the problem of critical civilian employment will take an additional toll: From Col. Ed Meese, USAR, in civilian life Attorney General of the United States, to local policemen and elected officials, additional thousands will be lost. All in all, a "yield rate" of 30 percent might be a more appropriate forecast—a prediction borne out in a series of recent mobilization exercises. From MOBEX's 76 and 78, to NIFTY NUGGET 78, to PROUD SPIRIT 80, the conclusions have pointed in the same direction: the inability of the reserve establishment to generate sufficient manpower on short notice.

Further, assuming that whole units and large numbers of IRRs could be assembled in a matter of days, there is no guarantee that adequate transportation would be available, since the reserves would have to compete with regular formations for scarce lift assets. And further still, even assuming a reasonable yield and adequate lift, could these reserves

[3] The West German *Bundeswehr* has an excellent partial solution to the individual replacement problem. For his first year after discharge, a soldier simply reports back to his old unit. After discharge from the Israeli Army, a soldier joins the reserve brigade in which he will spend his reserve career: a solution possible only in nations much smaller than ours.

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be employed effectively? One of the advantages of reserve units is cohesion; members know each other. Historically, reserve units have usually been broken up, redesignated, or used as fillers. In the case of the IRR, the problems of assigning strangers to combat units are all too well-known. But the practice, with all its administrative convenience and tactical stupidity, persists.

And finally, what would the political costs of mass mobilization on short notice be? This issue has gone largely unaddressed.

In sum, then, while reserve forces do possess some inherent advantages—costs, skill augmentation, garrison uses—they also exhibit inherent flaws. Lack of training time; equipment shortfalls; yield rates; transport problems; inevitable loss of cohesion upon mobilization; the political costs of disrupted lives—and mass casualties—in the localities whence the units come. A smaller nation, fielding a territorial defense force in fulfillment of an unambiguous mission, can work around these dilemmas. A global power cannot. And any global power which relies on reservists for expeditionary forces is, to quote General Washington, "resting on a broken staff" indeed.

"The figures don't close"

It is not possible to discuss actual mobilization and operational planning in any detail at the unclassified level. But the general contours of the problem seem clear, contours established both by American history and by the exigencies of the present moment.

Manpower has been a perennial problem. In World War II, the United States raised only about one-third of the number of divisions originally estimated to be necessary for victory, all but exhausting its manpower pool. Three times since then, the United States has embarked upon major conventional buildups: in the early 1950s, the early 1960s, and now. Each time, the lack of people has proved to be the Achilles' heel of rearmament. In an excellent short study for the Brookings Institution, William Kaufmann has demonstrated that the Pentagon traditionally evaded this fact by a convenient self-delusion.[4] Having concluded that only a fraction of the necessary forces could be raised, planning proceeded on the basis of an intellectual compromise: a fraction of American forces deployed overseas, with the rest held in the United States as the "Strategic Reserve" (not to be confused with the part-time reserve). These "Strategic Reserve" ground forces were described as "general purpose," i.e., available for duty anywhere. Unfor-

[4] William W. Kaufmann, *Planning Conventional Forces 1950-1980* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1982).

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tunately, forces configured to fight on the high-intensity battlefields of Europe have only marginal utility in jungles, and vice versa. Further, Pentagon planning has routinely assumed long periods of warning, a leisurely mobilization pace, and almost instant recourse to mass conscription. Today, none of these assumptions obtains, and the reserve establishment is expected to fill all gaps, almost instantly. And the situation is bound to become worse, given the lack of peacetime conscription, changing demographic realities (the military-age male cohort is due to shrink 15 to 20 percent over the next decade), and—most of all—a basic change in the nature of the "Strategic Reserve." To its credit, the Defense department has finally recognized that there is really no such thing as "general purpose" forces. Wisely, the Army has chosen to specialize: to create, in effect, different armies for different contingencies. But, however correct the new concept, the manpower shortfall—and the imprudent dependence upon reserves—will only grow worse.

The Army currently fields sixteen active divisions; a modest expansion (one division) is planned, but no major increase in uniformed strength. Ten of these divisions have been earmarked for NATO; four are deployed in Germany, six held in the United States for reinforcement within ten days of alert (the so-called "10/10" doctrine).[5] Of the remaining six divisions, two are specialty formations—paratroops and air assault—which cannot prudently be committed to sustained combat as whole divisions. One division resides in Korea. Another has been designated an experimental high-tech formation. This leaves, in effect, two divisions available for commitment elsewhere.

But, in addition to Europe and Northwest Asia, the United States also plans for combat in the Persian Gulf. Should the Central Command (the old Rapid Deployment Force) achieve its maximum target force level over the next few years, it could require three to five active Army divisions, in addition to the XVIII Airborne Corps (the 82nd Airborne and 101st Air Mobile). The Army has already begun the conversion of five existing divisions to light infantry: rapidly deployable forces tailored for the Central Command. Add to this contingency requirements for Korean reinforcement, Caribbean operations, and other activities, and, as they say in the Pentagon, "The figures don't close."

Of course, it may be argued that simultaneous commitment to several

[5]See Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger, *Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1984* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983), pp. 31-45, 122-23. See also U.S. Department of Defense, *Manpower Requirements Report, Fiscal Year 1984* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1983), pp. 1-7. See also Military Manpower Task Force, *A Report to the President on the Status and Prospects of the All-Volunteer Force* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1982), Section VI.

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theatres is not likely (even though Pentagon planning has routinely assumed such commitment), and that even light divisions have a certain European utility, and that these divisions will each be 6,000 to 8,000 men smaller than their heavy counterparts, and that the new 17th Division will help, and so on *ad infinitum*. But two facts remain: First, by choosing to specialize, the Army has greatly increased its manpower needs, even without changing its end strength; and second, absent conscription or a major increase in authorized end strength, the reserves will have to pick up the burden.

And that burden, as it now stands, is this: Of the sixteen currently active divisions, at least *nine* require massive "roundout" from units in the Selected Reserve: the addition of whole battalions and brigades of reservists in order to reach combat strength. The Individual Ready Reserve, under the most optimistic projections, currently fails to meet *short-term* casualty replacement and individual augmentee requirements by 200,000 to 300,000 men. If the Central Command reaches its full strength, it will contain about 100,000 reservists. And, in December 1983, the U.S. Navy had to place reservists aboard the battleship *New Jersey*, on combat duty off Lebanon, for one-month tours in order to allow a few members of the crew to go home on leave—which, all things considered, may be taken as an omen of more dependence to come.

The limits are inherent

It is not unusual to conclude articles of this kind with a section on recommendations, but that would be peculiarly inappropriate here. The essential problem lies less in the reserve establishment itself than in the uses to which it is put. To repeat: No power with global expeditionary requirements should depend upon reservists for the bulk of its forces. This is what the United States is doing today, and if present tendencies—and congressional advocacies—are any indicator, the trend will continue.

But, ironically, the Reserve establishment has responded to the challenge admirably. By any standard one cares to use (except IRR manpower levels), the reserves are in the best shape they have ever been. And indeed, this trend will also probably continue. The question is: Can it be enough?

I serve as a major in the Marine Corps Reserve. Over the past few years, I have held a variety of command and staff assignments: armory duty, planning with the Rapid Deployment Force, augmentation of regular headquarters staffs, service with the Army during the 1980

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Cuban Refugee Project. In almost every instance, I have encountered extraordinarily dedicated people, achieving astonishing results. But still, there are limits to what even the most effective reserve structure can accomplish—limits inherent in the nature of the entity, and limits which may some day exact a fearful human price from a society willing neither to reconsider its global commitments nor pay the price of meeting them.

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Reforming the defense budget process

JACQUES S. GANSLER

INCREDIBLE as it may seem, fully 27 months of official planning, justifying, and debating now precede the adoption of each annual United States defense budget. Every year, in January, the President submits his budget proposals to Congress for the fiscal year that begins the following October; during this nine-month period, officials of the Defense department make many trips to Capitol Hill, explaining their proposals and modifying them at the direction of Congress. To this nine-month period, one must add the 18-month budget planning process within the Defense department that precedes the submission of each January budget proposal. If one then adds the 12 months of the fiscal year itself, during which the department is spending or obligating itself to spend the money it has been appropriated, this makes for a *39-month* period of time for *each* annual defense budget.

What this means, of course, is that at any given moment the Defense department is involved with three, and sometimes four, different budgets in various stages of development. Spending according to the current one, testifying in support of the next one, planning for the one or two after that—the amount of time, effort, and, ultimately, money demanded is truly extraordinary.

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Reform and the rise of micromanagement

The current approach exists in spite of two valuable budgetary reform initiatives, one within the Defense department, one within Congress itself. Robert McNamara, President Kennedy's Secretary of Defense, introduced in 1961 the defense Planning, Programming, and Budgeting System (PPBS) (which was subsequently very influential in budget reforms for other agencies). McNamara's reform efforts were designed to make the budgeting process more rational and efficient, and to allow the department to take a more long-range view in planning to meet national security needs. To this end, McNamara and his associates changed the focus of the department from traditional categories of expenditure—such as "maintenance," "personnel," or "supplies"—to "program" categories, such as "Strategic Retaliatory Forces," "General Purpose Forces," and "Research and Development." Each of the latter programs would have its own specific components, but these would be thought of chiefly in relation to the program categories under which they were found, and would be evaluated, and their funding levels established, in relation to their role in fulfilling the particular mission specified by the program categories. As currently practiced, the 18-month PPBS process begins with the establishment of military strategy objectives by the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the services, and with general fiscal and policy guidance from the Secretary of Defense as to what resources will be available. Then, the services generate their own detailed budget proposals within their program categories, striving, in theory at least, to match their proposals to both the overall strategic goals and the anticipated resources available. The cycle ends when the major outstanding budget issues are resolved by the Secretary or the President, and the budget is submitted to Congress.

In Congress, the source of reform was the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974. The goals of the act were a unified budget, a longer-term (rather than year-to-year) perspective on budgeting, and the encouragement of analyzing budget items and establishing priorities so that the best trade-offs can be made when (as always) resources are limited. The most important feature of the act was the creation of the House and Senate Budget committees, which were to concern themselves with these three goals.

When the President submits his budget proposals, both houses of Congress conduct parallel sets of committee hearings. The House and Senate Budget committees address overall budget levels. They hear testimony that leads to Congress's "first concurrent resolution," which sets guidelines for overall spending, and later its "second concurrent resolution," which establishes binding budget figures. Appropriate

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House and Senate authorizations committees (in the case of the defense budget, the Armed Services committees of each house) hear testimony leading to specific authorizations of each program element. Authorizations are made for everything from weapons systems to manpower to reserve strength. What is more, the Appropriations committees of each house hear testimony on providing the money for each line-item in the budget. In addition to these six committees, a number of other committees have "oversight" functions for specific areas of the defense budget (for example, the Banking committees in connection with the Defense Production Act), and still more committees have responsibility for various defense practices, such as the Government Operations committees' jurisdiction over some defense procurement practices (like buying computers).

Although the reforms that have given us the current system were designed to instill orderliness and encourage rationality in the budget process, in many respects these desirable qualities have not come to pass. For example, if Congress makes even a few changes in the budget on which it is conducting hearings, there is not only a direct effect on the Defense department's plans for that year, but also an effect on the two other "out-year" budgets that the department is concurrently planning. To understand this effect, one must realize that a typical defense weapon system evolves over a 12- to 15-year period, in which any given year's defense budget is a one year's slice; if a system has money cut from its budget for the current year, it will have to reassess its "out-year" budget needs (not only to compensate for the lost money, but also to cover cost increases from the inefficiencies introduced by stretching out the program). This kind of change will in turn affect the amount of money available for other programs in the out-years, and this ripple effect permeates all future budgets. Needless to say, these effects undermine the coherence in the planning process that PPBS envisions. And, as we have learned through unhappy experience, members of Congress make not just a few changes, but rather pore over each new budget proposal line by line, making countless adjustments, redirections, and other "improvements." This detailed micromanagement occurs annually, with corresponding disruptions in the planning process.

It is not only the Congress that is guilty of making frequent, detailed changes at the expense of long-term considerations. The Defense department, too, along with other executive branch officials with responsibility for preparing the annual budget proposal (for example, those in the Office of Management and Budget), is prone to tinkering. The tendency is to focus all of one's attention on the budget for the next year, perhaps in response to Congress's lead. Because there are always

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pressures to economize within the department, as well as from Congress, the department and the services are further encouraged to stretch out their weapons acquisition programs in order to arrive at a reasonable figure for a given year, and in the hope of somehow "finding" the remainder in future years. This results in such phenomena as an aircraft production rate of one every two months (it is almost impossible—and certainly very inefficient—to build systems this slowly), and an exacerbation of the problem of long development times for weapons (in the 15 years between conception and deployment, they may even become obsolete). If the rest of the money is not "found"—in other words, if anticipated or hoped-for funding is not forthcoming—defense planners are left with the unpleasant choice of canceling some programs, or stretching all programs out further. The time-honored approach is the latter one, though it creates a vicious cycle: The greater inefficiencies introduced by stretching programs out lead to higher costs, which in turn lead to the need to economize by stretching programs out. In any event, it is the tail of expediency wagging the dog of planning.

Thus stability, coherence, and rationality—the characteristics most desired by the reformers—remain the qualities most lacking in the defense budget process. One might try to imagine a business—especially a very large buyer—changing all of its purchasing commitments every year! Private companies could not, and do not, operate this way; multi-year purchasing agreements are the rule. Yet the U.S. government, a monopsony buyer, continues to violate this rule. Incredibly, the United States is one of the few countries, if not the only country, in the world with a one-year defense budget. Rationalizing this process requires a stable, multi-year defense budget, and the adoption of a mechanism for stable long-range planning within the Defense department.

A multi-year alternative

It has been ten years since the implementation of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act, and, as with any major change in a large institution, its full effects have taken time to be felt and assessed. Implementation of this act was, by and large, desirable and significant for the effective operation of government. Its influence on the operations of Congress has been growing and, one may hope, will continue to do so in the future. Its goals (i.e., a unified budget, a longer-range perspective, and analysis for important tradeoffs) are vital to the effective operation of the U.S. government.

It has only been within the last few years that the significance and

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power of the Budget committtees have begun to be accepted by the numerous special-interest committees and subcommittees of the Congress. Thus, it is now time to assess some of the problems that have become visible during this period, and to make changes in the process that will improve its effectiveness in the coming decades.

There are essentially three major areas requiring improvement—not only for defense but for the other agencies as well: further encouragement toward the adoption of a longer-term perspective; a reduction of redundancy in the system; and improved timoliness in government actions. In comparison with parliamentary systems, our government has great difficulty in achieving a long-term perspective. Although Congress sets three-year "targets" for funding in the concurrent resolutions first considered by the Budget committees, the second- and third-year figures are currently not binding on either the executive or legislative branch. So goals notwithstanding, the system is exclusively focused on the one-year budget. The other two years are practically ignored (at the total obligation authority level and at the committee and subcommittee levels, as well as by the executive branch agencies), which further discourages efficiency.

The annual uncertainties in the budget have grown greater each year—even since the introduction of the Budget committees. In the case of defense, the largest of the "controllable" government accounts, we may note that in 1959, no part of the defense budget was "authorized" prior to the passage of its appropriation of funds. Now, though, the full defense budget is authorized annually, and each line item, as we have seen, is scrutinized in detail by six committees, their various defense subcommittees, and other committees with "oversight." This multiplicity of reviews—with its associated uncertainties and instabilities—has been aggravated by an extraordinary growth in the staffs of these committees. (An indication of this staff growth is that the number of Senate office buildings has tripled since 1959, while the number of senators is the same.) Thus, for example, in Fiscal Year 1984 over 700 line items of the defense budget were changed by the appropriations bill, and over 1,000 line items were changed by the authorization bill. The net effect of this is not only instability and uncertainty, but, far worse, inefficiency and reduced effectiveness for the taxpayers' dollars.

The obvious corrective action to achieve stability in America's budget process is to make Congress's out-year budget targets "binding" on Congress and, particularly, on the executive branch. While there is a constitutional question as to whether Congress can bind itself to specific appropriations beyond a two-year period, the critical issue here is the

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encouragement of a longer-term perspective. Thus, the requirement for a "binding" multi-year budget is to be focused on encouraging stability in the process. If necessary, the third-year ceilings may be made binding only on authorizations, leaving specific appropriations on a two-year schedule.

Many will object to a multi-year budget process, since it takes away a great deal of the annual "flexibility" of both the legislative and executive branches. But, of course, that is exactly the intent, since flexibility is the inverse of stability. Clearly, if there are good reasons (ranging from a new technological breakthrough to a change in world conditions or even a war) for rapidly increasing or decreasing our resource allocation to defense, then the levels of defense expenditures could change even during the budget year, and the multi-year plan could be adjusted accordingly. (One suggestion is to require a two-thirds majority vote to reopen the budget issue, either in the current year or for the next fiscal year.) But with the multi-year commitment always present, Congress would constantly have the longer-term implications of its revisions in view, and would thus be far less likely to make the many small changes that do not reflect changing world conditions. For example, once a major defense weapon system is committed in the budget, it will typically take seven to ten years for development and another five years for production. With a multi-year budgeting process, over that extended period the Defense department would have the obligation to run an efficient and effective program, and there would be no opportunity for Congress to tinker annually with the details of the program. (Of course, if external affairs—such as war—dictated that certain programs be accelerated, or if it was decided that a program should be canceled, this could certainly be accommodated.)

This binding requirement—subject to annual, broad congressional reviews (perhaps based on a separate vote on the "need" for a defense budget revision)—should apply at the total obligation authority level, and also within the major budget and program categories dealt with by the congressional committees and executive branch agencies. This would mean that the executive branch would be required to submit a budget for subsequent years that was consistent with the prior year's concurrent resolution—something that is simply not done today.[1] If the President chose to make a major point of either a reduced or increased budget in one or another agency (and for one or both of the out-years), he could do this in the form of an optional or alternative

[1] This, and a number of the other budget recommendations contained herein, can also be found in "Strengthening the Federal Budget Process: A Requirement for Effective Fiscal Control," Committee for Economic Development (June 1983).

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budget, submitted along with the budget he is required by law to submit in January (which, under this system, would have to be consistent with the out-years' concurrent resolution).

The advantage of this change would be to force both branches to look at the long-term implications of the actions they take in revising the budget. For example, a budget cut that may simply come back to haunt us the following year may now look attractive, but it would appear very unattractive if the out-year budgets were binding.

It must be re-emphasized that in any of the multi-year budget proposals, Congress would still have some form of an annual review. In many of the proposals advanced already, Congress would look each year at the period one year after the completion of the approved budget. For example, if we went to a three-year budget, then a fourth year would be added annually to replace the year that is expiring. This overlap, unlike the current overlap, would force both the executive and legislative branches to plan for the longer term—something that neither of them is able to do today.

There has been much talk in recent years about going to a two-year budget cycle (biennial budgeting). This cycle has a certain obvious appeal because of the two-year congressional term, and the constitutional restriction on appropriations. I have described a way around the latter constraint, and the former is simply a false argument, because over 95 percent of the members of Congress who run for office again are re-elected, resulting in a Congress with far greater stability than its members are willing to acknowledge. Moreover, the three-year process does still allow for ideological shifts and broad budget shifts when required. But even a two-year budget, if made binding, would be a step in the right direction—far better than the current "one-half year" budget (so-called because of the *two* concurrent resolutions on spending adopted each year by Congress). The timing of the two-year budget would be important (as discussed below), and it would have to be redone for the next two years well in advance, since the Defense department's internal budget preparation cycle is 18 months.

The historical argument for an annual budget process may once have made sense—when the government budget was relatively small, when the lead time for procurement of most items was relatively short, and when there were no Budget committees to resolve and unify the government's cash-flow. However, it is now time for a change. The recent Grace Commission Study highlighted the multi-billion dollar cost of instability in the defense budget process.[2] There really is no need, and

[2] The President's Private Sector Survey on Cost Control, Task Force Report on The Office of the Secretary of Defense (July 13, 1983).

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no excuse, for this instability to continue. Congress will have to give up a little of its "flexibility" for improved national efficiency and effectiveness.

Redundancy without planning

The achievement of a multi-year budget is clearly the single most important requirement of congressional budget reform. But the other two areas of reform I mentioned—reducing the redundant reviews (and the associated unnecessary workload of Congress), and completing the budget cycle in a timely fashion to allow the executive branch to operate effectively—are still very important to improve the overall effectiveness of the budget process, both for the Congress and the executive branch. A multi-year budget would facilitate both reforms.

It would be possible to justify the annual—and in some cases, semi-annual—review of the defense budget by six different Congressional committees if these committees would "stick to their knitting." But in fact, as we have seen, the members of the various committees and subcommittees and, in particular, their staffs, view the process as an opportunity for delving into every line item of the budget.

This has a huge impact on both sides. It consumes the time of the members of Congress—to such an extent that some Congressmen believe most of their attention is devoted to the budget, leaving little time for other legislative responsibilities. (For example, instead of line-item reviews, Congress could attempt to analyze the correlation between national policy objectives and the budget itself— something else that is not done today.) On the other side, one frequently hears the complaint that the chief occupation of senior members of the executive branch throughout the fiscal year is to prepare for or appear before one or another committee or subcommittee to testify in defense of their budgets. To understand the magnitude of this problem, we may look at some statistics for 1983: Defense department witnesses testified in hearings before 96 committees and subcommittees (a 357 percent increase in 13 years); 1,306 witnesses provided 2,160 hours of testimony. In addition, there were approximately 85,000 written congressional inquiries; and there were 21,753 pages of supporting documents submitted to justify the fiscal 1984 budget request (an increase of over 300 percent in 13 years).[3]

All of this activity (on both the legislative and executive sides) is focused on a single year's budget, so neither branch is looking ahead

[3] "The Budget Process in DoD," Vincent Puritano, Assistant Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) (University of Kentucky, oral presentation, Dec. 2, 1983).

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to the time at which current budget commitments actually are realized, three to five years hence (or even longer in the case of new weapon systems).

There are three ways to help solve this problem of redundancy, each difficult to implement. The first is to combine some of the existing congressional committees (and therefore, subcommittees). A variety of proposals has been made: combining the Budget and Appropriations committees; combining the Budget and Finance committees; even combining the Appropriations and Authorization committees. Those who argue in support of these various combinations note that when the Budget committees were created in 1974, other committees were not eliminated. There is some merit to each of these proposals, but it is crucial that the Budget committees themselves remain intact—otherwise, progress made over the last few years would be jeopardized. The political difficulties in combining other committees are obvious: Some members of Congress would necessarily find their influence diminished, and it is unclear whether that prospect would be acceptable.

A second approach to the redundancy problem would be to force the various committees to perform only the functions for which they were intended. For example, the Budget committees would look only at the top-line dollars in a given area, rather than at each detailed line item. But, of course, this is the stated objective today, and since it is not being followed—and there has been a tendency toward review in greater and greater detail by all of the committees and their staffs—one must wonder whether this change could, in fact, be brought about. (Congress would, in effect, be putting out a directive that says "Do what you are supposed to do.")

The third approach would be for the Congress to hold joint hearings within each House. In the case of defense, the Budget, Armed Services, and Appropriations committees would join together for one set of hearings, rather than each conducting its own. This would seem to be the easiest reform to implement, but practically speaking, political obstacles remain. For example, the question of who will be the chairman of the session may cause trouble. Again, it is a question of political influence within the Congress. But clearly, all three of these approaches would reduce the workload on the Congress and on the executive branch. They are all possible, if difficult. Congress is hurting itself, and the nation, if it fails to address and correct these problems.

The last of the major problems within the current budget process comes from Congress's notorious inability to release money to the executive branch at the scheduled times in the budget cycle. The rules are unequal: While the President must submit his budget on time,

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Congress does not feel compelled to meet its own mandated schedules (even though it gave itself an annual three-month extension when it revised the budget calendar in 1976). The problem of congressional delinquency has been with us for a long time: A defense appropriations act has been approved by the beginning of the fiscal year it is supposed to govern in only three of the past 32 years. But we now have reached the point at which major portions of the government operate for a whole year on the basis of continuing resolutions, whereby the preceding year's budget is temporarily extended into the next fiscal year to allow the continued operation of the government. In Fiscal Year 1983, six of the eleven categories of the overall budget were not authorized even by the *end* of the fiscal year!

Operating under a continuing resolution—as the Defense department has had to do for the past six years—not only causes obvious uncertainties and instabilities; its prohibition against raising the funding on any single line item also means that programs whose plans call for an efficient increase in funding are instead stretched out and funded at the prior year's level—thus causing large increases in the program's future costs. The consequences for efficiently planned programs that involve multi-year contracts are even more extreme. The money Congress *thinks* it is saving through delay is spent many times over in future years.

Surely, this trend toward procrastination must be reversed. The move to a multi-year budget—including appropriations—clearly will help, but greater discipline on the part of Congress is still required with respect to timing. Congress must simply force itself to behave in the same way that it requires the executive branch to behave. If the total budget—in its vast detail—can be put together on time by the executive branch, there is no legitimate reason that it cannot be reviewed by Congress in accordance with Congress's own schedule.

These three changes in the congressional budget process would go a long way towards achieving increased stability (and, therefore, efficiency) in the defense arena, but they must be matched by corresponding changes within the Defense department. Currently, as we have seen, the Defense department is at least as guilty as Congress of making annual, detailed line-item changes in the budget. Although the department now generates both five- and 15-year long-range resource plans, these are largely ignored in the crunch to fit everything into the binding one-year budget. The move to a multi-year budget will force the department to *use* these plans. It will also force the department to submit (and plan according to) realistic out-year budgets—ones based on the levels of the "binding" concurrent resolutions—rather than to indulge itself in

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planning according to optimistically high levels (like the 22 percent increase hoped for in Fiscal Year 1985) that are revised downward at the last minute. Finally, a multi-year budget will also encourage more realistic cost estimates in defense program budgets—since a program manager can no longer wishfully assume that "next year the budget will be increased." Realistic long-range program budgeting can thus be enforced by the department—something it is unable to do today. This combination of realism in estimating costs and greater program stability is the way to reverse the large "cost growths" in weapon systems' acquisition (the average program nearly doubles in cost during its acquisition cycle, but such growth is rarely budgeted).[4]

A new weapons selection process

In addition to encouraging these efforts toward realism and stability, we should be equally concerned to bring about greater coherence in the department's budget—in particular in the selection of which programs to fund. What is needed is the establishment of a long-range defense resource plan. Such a plan should be closely tied to national security objectives, fiscally constrained and unified (i.e., multi-service). In it, not only should the quality of specific weapon systems be addressed, but the quantity as well. Such a unified plan—with resources allocated to major military mission areas—would enable the department to be certain of precisely where its priorities lie.

Creating this plan, and working according to it, would require a shift in responsibility within the Defense department. Currently, it is the job of each of the three services to develop its own resource plans, and its own requirements for new weapons systems, as well as to implement these plans (with the approval of the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Congress). But this practice—each service going its own way—ignores the technological evolution that has resulted in enormous overlap in the roles and missions of the services. In almost all future missions, there will be joint operations among the services. The case of a battle in central Europe, involving a combined air, land, and space operation, is clear, as is the case of a combined Marine, Army, Navy, Air Force, and space amphibious operation in the Persian Gulf or the Caribbean. But in the future even a more ambiguous case, such as an at-sea operation by the Navy, is likely to involve space and land-based missiles or aircraft. And if the services will be fighting

[4] For a brief discussion of ways to improve the defense acquisition process see my article, "We Can Afford Security," *Foreign Policy* 51 (Summer 1983).

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together, it is desirable to establish our resource plans as well as weapons system requirements and selections on a joint (multi-service) basis—in order to get the most warfighting capability for the dollars available.

When this long-range resource plan is established in the presence of realistic five- to 15-year fiscal constraints, it will have the advantage of forcing the military to establish long-term priorities—rather than leaving this role solely to the Office of the Secretary of Defense or the Congress. Naturally, it must again be recognized that the levels of total defense dollars may well change in future years—based on changing world conditions—and that, therefore, there must be plans for possible changes in weapon system procurement levels. But these broad changes will not occur frequently—certainly not, as now, semi-annually—and, if properly planned, they need not affect each budget line-item (as is currently the case). The objective, again, is to focus the Defense department's weapon selection process, and its establishment of priorities for program funding, on a period five to 15 years hence, rather than on next year's budget.

Such plans would have the additional, important advantage of addressing in advance the issue of the quantities of weapons to be procured (over, say, a 15-year time period). If the total dollars for a mission area, and thus for a weapon system were allocated (and fixed) on the basis of a long-range, priority-ordered plan, then trade-offs on quantity versus quality would be considered during the resource planning process—thus giving proper consideration (now frequently missing) to the significant military value of increased quantities (even if a given system may perform at a slightly lower level than is theoretically obtainable).

If the Office of the Secretary of Defense becomes the policy and oversight organization that it should be, then the generation of this jointly developed and executed long-range plan would logically be the responsibility of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. This is clearly not within his current purview, but it could be were he given the proper staff, with incentives to reduce service parochialism.

In this plan the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs (rather than each of the separate service Secretaries) would submit an integrated proposal for a long-range resource plan to the Secretary of Defense.[5] This plan would be based upon guidelines provided by the Secretary of Defense (both fiscally and in terms of policy), and it would be up to the services

[5] This is a recommendation which has been made in a variety of forms by people such as Gen. David Jones (former Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff), Gen. Edward Meyers (former Chief of Staff of the Army) and by the National Military Command Structure Study. See Archie D. Barrett, "Reappraising Defense Organization" (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1983).

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and the chiefs of the unified (multi-service) and specified commands—acting through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs—to establish the priorities, the new system requirements, the quantities of systems to be procured, and the ties between these and national security objectives.

Much care, of course, would have to be given in staffing this planning organization, in order to achieve a multi-service perspective, and to develop genuine cross-service priorities. Otherwise, such a staff might amount to the simple sum of separate service interests. But over time, this could be done—especially with the greater role in the resource allocation process that would be assigned to the commanders-in-chief of the unified and specified commands. This change would not, however, require that the actual development and procurement of new weapons systems—nor the responsibility for their associated budgets—be directly under the control of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs. These could be decentralized, the implementation of the decisions of the Chairman and the Secretary of Defense being left to the services (who already have the necessary manpower and capability for this management role). Similarly, this change need not mean that all new weapons systems will be multi-service or standardized. Rather, it would mean that they would all be consistent with a jointly developed plan. In practice it seems likely that more multi-service weapon systems would result from this environment, but individual-service weapons, where useful, could certainly be included as well.

In order to overcome the obvious tendency of the services to favor their traditional weapon systems and ignore the non-traditional ones, guidance from the Office of the Secretary of Defense will be needed to encourage (and/or "hedge" funds for) non-traditional systems. Nevertheless, it is still more likely that these non-traditional systems would be recommended from a set of jointly developed requirements than from a set of individual service requirements.

This proposal represents a dramatic change, and will be difficult to implement due to service resistance—especially from the Navy, which has objected strenuously to comparable proposals for more unified decision-making. But it is critically important that it be implemented as soon as possible. Weapons systems initiated today will form the force structure for the United States defense posture over the next 20 or 30 years.

The essential lesson of the past three decades is that a major increase in the effectiveness of the dollars the U.S. spends on national security cannot come from small adjustments in procurement or budget practices. Rather, long-term stability and coherence must be introduced

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into the process of managing our defense resources. Doing so will require major changes on the parts of both the Congress and the Defense department. Both a multi-year defense budget, and a unified (multi-service), long-term resource plan can yield the needed stability and coherence. Each will be difficult to implement, but our national security posture requires it, and the taxpayers deserve it.

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The social policy of the Reagan administration: a review

NATHAN GLAZER

THAT the Reagan administration may indeed be something new on the American scene is suggested by the fact that no less than two major programs assessing its domestic social policy were launched shortly after it came into office. One is the Urban Institute's "Changing Domestic Priorities Project," the other the program being conducted by Princeton's Urban and Regional Research Center. And, of course, we also have the ongoing analyses of federal budgets in the Brookings Institution's annual *Setting National Priorities* volumes.

It is important to emphasize that almost all the published works of these excellent enterprises deal with governmental *intentions*, so any final assessment of the Reagan administration's social policies is still impossible. These intentions have been only partially realized, what with all the distortions imposed by economic crisis, political realities, fiscal pressures, interest group resistance, and the like. We now have analyses of the budgets—and budget processes which so changed them—for fiscal 1982, but only scanty analysis of the budget and budget process for fiscal 1983. Expenditures may be substantially different from projections. Indeed, by the time the administration's budget proposals for 1984 were presented to Congress in early 1983, the initial fascination with the impact of changes in domestic social policy was transformed into an almost exclusive concentration on the crisis that

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might be portended by huge deficits. The contrast between the Brookings volumes for 1983 and 1984 is striking. The first concentrates on the significance of the cuts in social programs in the 1982 budget and on what their impact may be. The second deals almost entirely with the budget deficit, concentrates on those domestic programs—e.g., social security and health services—that contribute heavily to it, and focuses on the tax policies that have helped create it. The analysis of the actual impact of the cuts that were begun in a modest way in the 1981 fiscal year by the new administration, and in a major way in the 1982 budget, is still only in an early stage.

It is almost as if the problems of social policy, initially overwhelmed by the fear of inflation, are now, after a brief moment of prominence, to be overwhelmed by the problem of budget deficits. But the question remains: What has happened to the long burst of social policy that was initiated in the administration of John F. Kennedy, achieved maturity in the first years of the administration of Lyndon Johnson, was scarcely checked in the administrations of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford as new programs poured from Congress and old ones grew rapidly, was sustained through the administration of Jimmy Carter—and was expected to receive a decisive and historic check and reversal in the administration of Ronald Reagan?

Such an expectation of a reversal in the course of American domestic social policy was no albatross hung on the incoming administration for partisan reasons. The Reagan administration was truly motivated by ideological intentions, which it was not shy to proclaim. But translating intentions into programs is never too easy a matter in American politics.

Initial intentions

The Reagan administration came to office with a program in which barely any element had been tailored to what had been considered for decades the fixed elements of American social policy. It promised not to do anything to affect Social Security benefits—that was all. Beyond that, it simply committed itself, in general terms, to *reverse* the course in social policy that had been set for almost 20 years—by Congress if not always by the White House. Mr. Reagan campaigned, not only against big government, big taxes, big expenditures—all easy to do in general—but, with more or less specificity, against the innovations in social policy that had characterized the preceding two decades. The only beneficiary group of the past two decades that was granted exemption was the aged. Everyone else was put on pretty clear notice as to where the new administration, if it came to office, would stand.

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The incoming administration's proposed actions were not simply a reflection of annoyance with governmental intervention and the size of the tax bill, but also rested on fairly coherent ideological themes. Their underlying force was provided by a vision of how societies grew economically and what makes them strong. Individual action, unhampered by government, spurs an economy. Consideration for the poor, in the form of special programs, tends to undermine the incentives that move the poor into economic action and out of poverty. If only government gets out of people's way, they can make their own way.

Supply-side economics in its nascent stage was seized upon as a more sophisticated rationale for what was basically a simple view of human nature and of society: Cuts in income tax rates would restore individual and corporate initiative, and a flood of increased economic activity would reduce inflation, take care of the poor, eliminate the heritage of racial discrimination, reduce the deficit, and provide the wherewithal for a huge buildup of national defense.

An ideology can best be defined by what it is against. The Reagan administration's ideology was against confidence in the capacity of a central human wisdom, incarnated in government, to plan for and manage the economy, and to cope successfully with the problems of the poor and the unfortunates in a complex industrial society. Admittedly no ideology can escape the reality that governments are now held responsible—and have been, since at least the Great Depression— for the general state of the economy. But Mr. Reagan's ideology, opposing Keynesian "fine-tuning" and "social engineering" (leave aside that no administration could escape from both—but we speak of its thrust), said it would strike out on a new course in which supposed human wisdom as embodied in government was to recognize its limitations. Corollaries of this approach were greater reliance on the initiatives of private philanthropy, local government, and the states. It was symbolic that both the education and energy departments were scheduled to be eliminated.

So much was intended, so much was expected, so much was feared. One must ask, what then ensued?

The scale of change

The ideology was so clear; the reality is so complex. It is easier to study what the administration intended than what has actually happened. To estimate significance is even more difficult.

It may indeed be premature for a full assessment of the Reagan administration in the light of the history of American social policy. But

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in view of the increasing difficulties further changes will meet, it may not be too soon for a tentative assessment. Most of what may happen has already happened. The big change was signaled by the budget of 1982, and by the legerdemain of the Reconciliation Act of 1981. No subsequent change will be as great. Even the last revolutionary burst in social policy, that of Johnson's Great Society, saw all its major legislation passed in its first two years. No matter how great an electoral victory, that seems to be the maximum amount of time given to a president to introduce change. After that, and often long before, the powers of inertia and opposition have regrouped to make further change difficult. And so the budget of 1983 did not add much more to what the budget of 1982 had done in advancing the ideology and program of the Reagan administration; that of 1984, it turns out, will do less.

We must begin with one large statement. Less has happened in the realm of social policy than the amount of anger, resistance, agonizing, and media reporting suggests. There have been reductions in some key programs, particularly if measured against the size they might otherwise have attained in a severe recession. Undoubtedly distress has risen, and substantially—but this is probably more to be attributed to the impact of the recession than to substantial social policy changes. One says this knowing how difficult it is to document scale of change, when one does not know what baseline to measure it against. But various authorities who have examined the *annus mirabilis* of substantial social policy cuts and social policy changes summed up in the Reconciliation Act of 1981 agree on the scale. It is not very large.

The 1983 Brookings study asserts that the reductions of 1981, imposed on the budget of 1982—the only year in which the Reagan administration was able to get most of what it wanted accepted by Congress—was $27.1 billion in outlays, hardly enormous in a budget of $725 billion.[1] Ellwood, in the Princeton analysis, gives a somewhat larger estimate: He reports that the Congressional Budget Office estimated cuts of $35.2 billion in outlays, more in budget authority. Richard Nathan, in the same volume, thinks this is too high: "Estimates of the total reductions in the 212 federal budget accounts affected by the reconciliation act range from a high of 51 billion in budget authority and 33 billion in outlays to a low of 37 billion in budget authority and 15 billion in outlays. . . . These cuts amount to between 10 percent and 7 percent of current policy budget authority for all spending in fiscal year 1982 aside from defense spending and interest on the national

[1] Joseph A. Pechman, ed., *Setting National Priorities: The 1983 Budget*, and *Setting National Priorities: The 1984 Budget* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1982, 1983).

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debt, and between 7 percent and 3 percent of all outlays." But Nathan concludes, arguing with the front part of the book: "We believe estimates in the lower range should be used in assessing the outlay cuts of 1982." He sensibly points out that public officials, conservative and liberal alike, have a strong tendency to overstate the size of the cuts—conservatives to demonstrate they are really carrying out their program, liberals to build up public support against further cuts.[2] Palmer and Mills, in the Urban Institute report, stand closer to Brookings, estimating non-defense program reductions in outlays of $31.6 billion, 6.4 percent of their baseline expenditures for 1982 (rising to $54.8 billion or 8.2 percent of the baseline expenditure for 1986—but many things will happen between now and 1986, and we can safely leave 1986 for other analysts to come).[3]

Where change did occur

In one sense, all these estimates understate the cuts, insofar as they take as a base "non-defense expenditures." Most of non-defense expenditures were almost impossible to reduce, primarily for political reasons. Social Security was sacrosanct. The huge Medicare expenditures were very difficult to reduce; here the problem was not only massive political resistance but the simple technical difficulties of finding a mode of reimbursement that did not rise very rapidly and did not threaten the quality of health care. Pensions for government servants and the military were as sacrosanct as Social Security. So the reductions, perhaps a modest 4 percent of the total budget, could rise to a striking percentage of these parts of the budget that were not as well defended as Social Security and pensions and Medicare. Cuts that were small in light of the total non-defense budget could amount to very substantial percentages of some programs, and, as it turned out, those were programs most focused on the poor. While AFDC (welfare), food stamps, and Medicaid might be considered by some as "entitlements" of the same order as Social Security or Medicare, there was no getting around the fact that the latter were based on taxes and contributions that were devoted specifically to them. They were "insurance"—if not in the strict sense, at least in the public mind, and the minds of their beneficiaries. These "entitlements" focused on the poor were not seen in the same way, were not buttressed by the sense that they had

[2] John William Ellwood, ed., *Reductions in U.S. Domestic Spending* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1982), pp. 24, 320.

[3] John L. Palmer and Isabel V. Sawhill, eds., *The Reagan Experiment* (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, 1982), p. 78.

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been paid for and that people therefore had a right to them. Thus a common sense of justice, as well as simple political reality—the fact that far more people get Social Security than welfare, that far more get Medicare than Medicaid, and that those who get the insurance-type entitlements participate more actively in politics and carry more political weight than the poor—combined to focus the cuts on benefits to the poor, whether directly or flowing through state and local government.

In total, even those cuts could not be called massive, particularly since one could expect cuts in some programs to show up as unexpected increases in others. There are many different forms of entitlements and various kinds of programs of assistance to the unfortunate, all of different legal statuses. And despite the highly informed summaries and estimates I have noted, to my knowledge no one has yet sorted out the overall effects, post-budget, of even the cuts of FY 1982, and whether the cuts estimated on the basis of 1981 action were "really" there after the end of FY 1982. (This, for example, would involve sorting out the effects of the recession, which made many more eligible, from the effects of the reduction of eligibility ceilings, or changes in rules, in AFDC and food stamps.)

There is another sense in which many of the changes in social programs could be said to be more moderate than the uproar over the cuts indicated. Many of the proposed and enacted program cuts had been proposed by previous administrations (including Democratic ones) and were seen by independent, or at any rate not sharply partisan, policy analysts as valuable in themselves. And, indeed, the growth of entitlement programs and programs of grants to states and localities had already received some check under the Carter administration. In the élan of the Reagan victory and with a stunned Congress, a great deal could be done that earlier administrations, even with a more positive outlook on the value of governmental activity, wished to do but could not. So, then, while the cuts could be attributed to the new ideology of less government and less government aid to the poor, they were made possible not only by ideology but by the fact that these restructurings and reductions were already part of the potential array of government actions, often proposed and stacked away for hopeful future use in the Office of Management and Budget or in the agencies. How many of these cuts could not be attributed simply to the Reagan administration and its philosophy but to the ongoing efforts, generally frustrated, to streamline government and make it more efficient—an effort that goes on without great success under *every* administration—may be seen in an interesting evaluation of the kinds of cuts that were

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made (and proposed and not made) by Palmer and Sawhill in the Urban Institute study:

> Some of the program changes proposed by the Reagan administration have long-standing antecedents and were widely considered meritorious. Several had been advocated by earlier administrations, usually for reasons that went beyond simple budgetary considerations. Examples are reductions in the guaranteed student loan subsidy and support for physician education, reduced reliance on new construction in housing assistance programs, and the scaling back of public service employment.
>
> Other proposals, though representing a more marked departure from past presidential policies, were fully developed prior to the Reagan administration and had considerable bipartisan support. Examples . . . are the reduction of direct federal housing finance operations and greater user fees for transportation services.
>
> Several measures reduced or eliminated programs that many policy makers and analysts had criticized as being of dubious effectiveness, although such cutbacks had not been proposed by previous administrations. Examples include the Professional Standards Review Organizations (PSRO's) and certificates of need programs in health, trade adjustment assistance, and several small regional economic programs.

Palmer and Sawhill also look favorably on some cuts in programs in need of "trimming and restructuring": Social Security benefit cuts for early and new retirees, the cap on federal Medicaid grants to states (both rejected by Congress), and cuts in CETA training programs.

On the other hand, Palmer and Sawhill asssert, programs with a record of success or strong promise of success were also scheduled for severe cuts. Examples: immunization grants, the Job Corps, the nutrition program for low-income pregnant women, infants, and children, compensatory education for disadvantaged children, and the new child welfare services program. And some of the program changes they call "gambles that could jeopardize stated purposes." (Reductions in income-related benefit payments are the big example here, and will be analyzed further below.) Finally, they emphasize the general point that poverty and social problems, because of their unequal distribution geographically, *do* require federal involvement.

To many, this will be a rather too benign evaluation of the program cuts. Yet it is true that many proposals made and implemented were those of previous administrations and had been recommended by nonpolitical policy analysts. One must take this into account in estimating the direct impact of the strong ideological character of the new administration in changing the mix in social policy.

And yet another factor moderates this impact: Both an increase in defense spending and a decrease in the income tax rates—believed to be inhibiting economic recovery—were generally felt to be in the cards.

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The increase in the defense budget was already under way during the Carter administration. To quote Palmer again: "The ratio of federal taxes to GNP had . . . crept up [in the years before 1981]. Another in the series of periodic tax cuts was clearly in order for the early 1980's, but it would have to be accompanied by greater spending restraint if it were not to result in a continued upward drift in the federal tax burden or high risk of large deficits. It was also evident that the burden of any such spending restraint would have to fall primarily on non-defense spending, since Congress (and the Carter administration) had recently initiated a program of real defense growth planned to be sustained well into the 1980's."

Of course, this says nothing about the scale of the tax cuts, or their type, or about the rate of military buildup. Much criticism of the ominous budget deficits—and consequent pressure on that modest portion of the budget that presents the easiest targets for cutting—has concentrated on these two features. Yet the Brookings analysts show what is overall a moderate rate of increase in real spending for defense—an increase between 1979 and 1985 of just about 0.3 percent of GNP a year, during a period covering two such disparate administrations as those of Carter and Reagan, with a bigger bump (0.5 percent) for 1982. (These figures are based on the 1983 budget. Brookings '84 shows a slightly higher rate of increase in defense expenditure as percentage of GNP, a slightly slower increase as a percentage of total budget outlays.) As for the tax cuts of 1981, already somewhat weakened in 1982, they were not exactly what the administration wanted. A riot of tax cuts had occurred in the Congress, many going far beyond administration proposals. The point remains that, in some considerable measure, the program cuts were based on a continuity of policies and pressures independent of the specific ideology of the administration.

The eclipse of "social engineering"

But even if the overall cuts in social programs were not devastating, even if much of what happened was owing less to specific ideology than to the pressures of economic recession, defense spending increases, and tax cuts reducing government's income, the fact remains that the administration—within the limits of freedom that any administration must expect in the American political and economic order—was able to convey its view on social policy.

The most striking pattern that has emerged is one that I would call the rejection of "social engineering"—of the capacity of human foresight, using subtly graduated incentives and disincentives, and

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sharply focused programs, to affect human behavior and to improve the human condition. This was the dominant ideology of social policy in the 1960s and 1970s; it has been sharply rejected in the 1980s. When one writes the history of American social policy, I think one will have to put the greatest weight on this theme: An optimistic evaluation of social scientific capabilities marked the 1960s and the 1970s, with confidence decreasing in the 1970s. The evaluation itself was rejected by the Reagan administration, without apparently any great (or sufficiently great) movement of resistance by any powerful sector of the American population.

A number of the significant program reductions of the Reagan administration demonstrates this rejection. Perhaps the most striking is the end of what we might call social-science-based welfare reform, which had been so important a part of the domestic initiatives of the Nixon and Carter administrations. An approach to welfare reform shaped by economists, on the basis of theories and assumptions by social workers and sociologists, dominated this period of reform. Economists wanted to simplify the array of aids going to poor families, and to modify incentives both to family break-up and to reduction of work effort. The approach that was developed—one in which the adjustment of the incentives inherent in social policy would bring forth the socially-desired behavior from men and women and families, without resort to direct prohibitions and requirements—has been called the "incentive" approach by Leslie Lenkowsky. It assumed that a high implicit tax on earnings (imposed by reducing welfare benefits for those who make income) reduced incentive to work; and that a program aimed at income maintenance for mothers and their children, rather than for complete families, reduced incentives to fathers to stay with their families and help support them. Major social experiments were launched to test the effects of this approach, on different populations, using different tax rates and different support levels. But the experiments, it was assumed, would simply confirm the obvious: That in the current system there were incentives to family break-up and reduced work effort, so that any change in the system towards a more uniform support of working *and* non-working poor families, of those with father present *and* those without, would represent an improvement. These were the underlying assumptions of the reforms proposed by the Nixon and Carter administrations and they were rarely challenged. What was challenged was whether sufficiently strong incentives to increased work effort could technically be built into a reform; it was scarcely doubted, however, that positive family efforts would follow a reform.

Now, while AFDC is by no means the largest social program, and

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indeed compared to Social Security and Medicare is minor, with even Food Stamps and Medicaid larger, it has always been considered a key program in social policy. It is *the* major basic program for the destitute; it encompasses a substantial proportion of the black population (about a fifth); it is the major means of support of large parts of the population of large central cities; it includes a particularly high proportion of children; and it raises in the sharpest form the fear that many Americans will not be integrated into work and family life, and will pass on their dependency to their children. This is not the place to analyze the evidence for that fear, some of which is scanty. The fear exists, and a program that costs $8 billion of federal money, and similar amounts from state and local sources, has received more concentrated and steady attention and analysis than perhaps any other program of its size.

All this analysis was scrapped by the Reagan administration, which decided that welfare would be held down by reverting to the pattern of what seemed (by 1981 standards) an almost primeval period in social policy. Welfare would become basic charitable support, with a sufficient degree of harshness in administration and in limitation of benefits that people who could work would be happy to get off, and those who did work would try to stay off—*even if* working provided less than welfare.

Welfare: from incentives to norms

The chief example of this view, and the factor against which the strongest criticism was directed by almost all policy analysts—and of course all those who benefited from welfare and their supporters—is the change in the treatment of earnings incorporated into the Reconciliation Act of 1981. For a long time, the first $30 of monthly earnings by those on welfare, and one third of the remaining earnings, could be deducted—simply ignored—in making an estimate of need. The Reconciliation Act allowed such deductions only during the first four months of employment. It also placed a cap on work expenses that could be disregarded in calculating income and need—for child care, $160 per child per month, for work expenses, $75 per month. It limited the total income any family could get and still qualify for welfare. And there were other changes. There is no question that such changes, from a purely economic point of view, reduce incentives to work while on welfare, and this is why they were so fiercely attacked. It was argued that working recipients would cease work to stay on welfare.

Two observations are pertinent. One argument of those who favored a high welfare minimum was that the poor wanted to work, and that their behavior in seeking work would not be affected by increasing the

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minimum support level. The Reagan administration turned this argument on its head: If the poor would not reduce work effort when the minimum support level was high, and was only moderately reduced by work earnings, they would *not* reduce work effort if the support level was more sharply affected by work earnings. If economic incentives did not outweigh a culturally-based desire to work in the first case, they would not reduce it in the second. And, in the event, some preliminary research did not indicate a rush to leave jobs so as not to lose the benefits of welfare. Thus, the Richard Nathan study of the response of states and localities to budget cuts finds "the return rate for families removed from the welfare rolls due to the Reagan changes so far has been low—about 10 percent on average. This estimate is based on information from those states and local jurisdictions that had conducted studies covering the first six months to one year of experience under the new policies."[4] And a widely noted study by the Research Triangle, which compared the behavior of welfare recipients leaving the rolls in 40 localities in 27 states, before and after the Reagan changes, from the point of view of finding out whether there was a rush to return to welfare after the changes, found no such effect. Admittedly these findings are preliminary. But once again note that as against much *prospective* analysis of what the effects of the changes of 1981 would be, it was only in April and May of 1983 that one had any *post-budget* analysis of these important changes.

A second observation: All the incentives that had been built into the system to encourage work did not seem to have much effect anyway. This may have been owing to the incapacity of most adults on welfare (women with limited education) to work, the limited number of jobs, or the simple fact that for mothers without great prospects of earning much from work, welfare was preferable. But it was revealing that in those states most generous in incentives to work, such as New York, few adults on welfare did so; in those states most niggardly in this respect, more people worked. Perhaps we had exaggerated the significance of work incentives to begin with. If this was the case, then a system which took it for granted that people should work and that work income was a desirable *substitute* for welfare, rather than a desirable *addition* to it, might encourage the work ethos that still existed in most Americans, rather than lead to a rush away from work to get the less painful and more desirable benefits from welfare.

[4] Richard P. Nathan, in Fred I. Greenstein, ed., *The Reagan Presidency: An Early Assessment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), p. 62. See also Richard P. Nathan, Fred C. Doolittle, and Associates, *The Consequences of Cuts: The Effects of the Reagan Domestic Program on State and Local Governments* (Princeton: Princeton Urban and Regional Research Center, 1983).

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One other change in the treatment of earned income should be mentioned: Low income families have been eligible for some years for an Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), or rebate, if they work. This was introduced as one of the incentives to work. Under the Reconciliation Act, it is to be taken into account in determining income eligibility, whether families apply for it or not. This is one way of reducing the welfare payment, but it reduces it only by taking into account what another benefit of the federal government will provide. With proper education, it will certainly lead everyone eligible to apply for the EITC. And this is all to the good. It means the low-income welfare family will be educated to make out an income tax return, and educated to the fact that the federal government will do something *more* for you if you work, which is symbolically rather different from saying "we will not reduce your welfare payment if you work." One approach assumes that work is the norm, the second that welfare is the norm. To an economist, they may both be incentives to work. In reality, they have different effects. I would argue that an EITC—which welfare families will be told they should apply for if they are not to get their benefits reduced—has a different kind of teaching effect.

Various other changes were introduced into welfare which deserve comment as indicating which way the administration was moving and how it was implementing its ideology. For example, part of a step-parent's income could now be considered as income available for support of AFDC step-children. Under previous law, as interpreted by the Supreme Court, a woman with children by other men could live with a man who was not the father of her children, and he would not be responsible for the support of those children. Certainly this encouraged women to take up with other men, men who could live serially with mothers for whose children's support they would not be held responsible. If limitation on family break-up was one objective of welfare policy, here was one possible approach. But note that the approach was *not* to encourage family stability by means of an incentive; it was to promote stability by *imposing a norm*—i.e., that a man living with a mother and her children had an obligation to support the woman with whom he lived as husband, the children with whom he lived as father.

A social worker might argue that imposing a traditional norm was no way of getting traditional behavior. Becoming liable for support for mother and children, the man would just not move in, and there would be more female-headed families, not less. Very possibly so. Nevertheless, as in the case of work, the incentive-based approach had once again been abandoned, in favor of what we may well call moralism and

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traditionalism. The man in the house should contribute to the support of that mother and children, whether he had an economic incentive to do so or not.

A final change deserves notice: If a woman had no previous children, she would not be eligible for welfare benefits until the sixth month of pregnancy. One of the presumed scandals of welfare—we leave aside the question of how widespread the scandal is—is that girls may be treated as women, with their own welfare grant for themselves and their child, as soon as they become pregnant. Teenagers can thus achieve independence through their own, pregnancy-generated income. Whether this is a factor in the monstrous illegitimacy rates in poor areas, and in particular in poor black areas, is difficult to say unequivocally, as is the case in any other kind of incentive analysis: Maybe there are enough other reasons for girls to become pregnant at such a high rate, for example the need to be loved or to have someone else to love. Welfare's hitherto non-judgmental, supportive role was now modified. Certainly one effect of the rule was to increase—admittedly by only a few months—the period during which a parent can exercise financial control over a child. This is worth noting, because it tells us not only what welfare had become, but also what the Reagan administration was trying to do with welfare.

All this is, to me, rather independent of the question of how much money these changes would save. Probably very little. There were some modest savings to the federal government. There were other modest savings to states, which could now provide lower benefits. If so inclined, states could maintain previous benefits. One must emphasize that the issue here is what benefits the federal government would share in funding: States could go far beyond this, and many did. But they indicate a direction, and the direction is against the social engineering of welfare recipients' lives through a subtle pattern of economic incentives, and towards the simple insistence that all that welfare was going to do was take care of the destitute, and, if possible, get them to work. They would work, if they did, because they should, not because they would be getting a reward from government for working, a reward that was not available to other low-income workers who had not gone on welfare. The traditional incentives, to work and family support, were now assumed, rather than paid for.

The withdrawal from education and urban policy

There were other examples of the abandonment of the social engineering approach. One of them was the incorporation of 29 educa-

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tional programs into one consolidated block grant. Many of these programs were pet projects of various congressmen. Others, such as the important grants under the Emergency School-Aid Act (ESAA), did represent what I have called the "social engineering" approach: targeting money to deal with a complex social problem in specified ways, with an underlying assumption that Washington would know better how to deal with it than local officials. ESAA grants were for the purpose of dealing with the problems of desegregation. They flow from the notion that there are a variety of possible programs that will ease the strains and burdens of desegregation. Many of them are designed by professors of education and sociology and communication—and many of them serve to give consultation and other fees to such professors and other desegregation experts. Perhaps some of this money has helped. School districts will take it because they will take money for any purpose, hoping to shift at least overhead costs to them. Experts will fight for them because they believe they have expert advice and expert training to provide for difficult problems. The federal government proposes such action because it believes it can deal with difficult social problems by well targeted money. The fact that no less than 29 programs, with a variety of origins and purposes, were simply bundled into one program for the states indicates that the Reagan administration, after five preceding ones, had given up the belief it knew better than the locals. (There was of course another reason for block grants: the commitment to federalism, which is independent of the question of whether the feds knew better than the states and locals or not.)

Anyone interested in seeing how far the federal government had gone in trying to guide education—and how far Congressmen had gone in imposing their pet ideas—may peruse in amazement and at leisure the list of 29 programs that the Reagan administration succeeded in combining into one block grant.

And yet a third case of the abandonment of social engineering was in housing and community development. This is the area to which the word "planning" was most often applied in the past. "Planning" of course is anathema to those who believe a central governmental intelligence can do no better, and indeed will do worse, than small units of decision-making, from individuals and families to states, operating on their own. Public housing projects were "planned," urban renewal projects were planned. More than that, piecemeal planning of major projects occurred within a federally supported effort to plan for the city as a whole. The well advertised disasters of the great American city—President Carter posing in the ruins of the South Bronx—would suggest that here is an area where such an effort is needed. Planning

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had undergone various transmutations in the course of the 1960s and 1970s, but it was still a central theme of federal policy for the city. The 1960s saw the multi-branched effort to deal with juvenile delinquency in low-income areas of cities by complex urban programs, the poverty program which succeeded it, "community participation" which became a major theme of the poverty program, and of the Model Cities program which succeeded it. The provision of low-cost housing for the poor in newly built developments was a steady accomplishment to these more socially minded efforts at urban planning. But dismay with large projects led to Section 8 in 1974 under Nixon, and to the subsidization of (mostly) new housing in developments built for the poor by private developers. The Carter administration launched a major urban program, little of which was adopted, but by the end of the Carter administration the analysts of the administration-sponsored *Agenda for the Eighties* were gloomily suggesting that most efforts to shore up jobs and population in older cities be abandoned.

The Reagan administration has not even spoken of an urban policy. It does not think it knows how to help older cities, and its dependence on free market mechanisms suggests it would not try if it thought it knew how. Its major initiative, if it comes to pass, is likely to be housing vouchers, which reduces even that modicum of the planning thrust that was still left in Section 8. Under a housing voucher plan, the poor would find their own housing and local communities would have no greater control, stemming from federal mandates, in affecting such housing than they have for any other kind of housing development—and less, in view of the fact that housing vouchers, if they came to pass, could be used in existing housing.

Any of these areas is enormously complicated, but the thrust is clear: Government has given up the effort to do better in social policy, as this has come to be understood. And it has given up, too, the effort to complete the pattern of governmental services in a developed welfare state that was so marked a feature of the 1960s and 1970s. If there are gaps in the American welfare state, the administration is saying, so be it. We have already done more than we should, more than any administration can dismantle, and our only responsibility is a "social safety net" which will deal with the most serious cases of distress. Income redistribution further up the chain of income is no aim of this government. Quite the contrary, its tax cuts and other measures show no inhibition about having rich people, and more people of whatever income status, retain more of their funds for their own use. This approach is based on a commitment to individualism and individual economic freedom, not to any concern for the poor or equality, though

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when pressed administration spokesmen claim it will help the poor through general prosperity more than any program addressed directly to them and their needs. No one argues it will produce more equality.

Ironically, for a while it seemed the biggest hole in the American system of social policy might be partially plugged because of the deep recession. I refer to the absence of a system of medical insurance for those who are neither old, nor poor, nor have a job. With a high unemployment rate, this gap becomes more evident. With the pushing down of the income limits at which poor people can qualify for welfare—and its associated Medicaid—the gap has been further spotlighted. Indeed, the fear of losing Medicare benefits should be a greater incentive to avoid work-income, which might push one above the welfare-beneficiary level, than the desire for money benefits from welfare itself (though I know of no research on this issue specifically). But it scarcely needs research to demonstrate that the loss of health benefits associated with jobs may be a disaster. Something may yet be done to fill part of the largest hole in American health insurance, though the administration is reluctant.

The significance of federalism

There is a second ideological theme, closely related to the first, that is strongly in evidence in the administration's social policy: returning programs to the states, and restricting federal controls. This was also a theme of the Nixon administration, where many block grants were proposed, and some were created. The Reagan administration has been more successful, though hardly as successful as it wished.

Does this have the further effect of hurting the black and poor? So their advocates think. They are used to dealing with Washington, and prefer Washington controls on social programs, which they believe they can better influence, than state controls. However, no easy answer is possible. Now that blacks can elect mayors in Chicago, Philadelphia, and most other big cities, now that increased registration and voting for blacks are making their power evident in many states, it is hard to believe that the results of such turnbacks to the states will not be various—depending on the political situation in each state—rather than uniformly in favor of white and middle class groups. Close federal control over welfare, with sympathetic administrators monitoring each state, has not prevented huge disparities in benefits, coverage, and regulations. If Texas can run the kind of skimpy welfare system it does under federal tutelage it is hardly likely to run a harsher one with fewer federal controls. And it is likely that a growing Mexican-American

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political presence will do more to change the Texas welfare system—if it changes at all—than close federal control. I would argue similarly with regard to federal programs in education and housing.

Even after a period of enormous growth in federal power, we are still a federal system, with more of our taxes raised by independent state and local authorities than in any other developed industrial nation. There is no question that ideology impels a return to states' rights in the Republican administration, and that in the past this has been associated with conservatism and even racism. But we have always had states like New York and Massachusetts to undermine this association, and now we have states like North Carolina and Georgia that are not very different in their politics on race and poverty. A slogan changes its concrete meaning with social change. Federalism happens to be written into the Constitution, which still shows remarkable vitality and arouses enormous commitment. A return to federalism will, of course, focus more attention on the states, and will require the building and rebuilding of new connections between interest groups and state capitals. But in a large and heterogeneous country, with varied ethnic and racial groups, striking regional differences, different codes of morality dominant in different sections, it is a good thing that a substantial degree of power remain in the states and cities.

A major contemporary economic argument against the federalism and state power built into the Constitution is that there are certain social problems that must be dealt with at the national level, because they affect various parts of the country differently. If a section is burdened with poverty and with limited resources, its effort to deal with poverty on its own, without transfers from wealthier parts of the country, will mean raising its tax rates, driving away industry, and a further reduction of the tax base necessary to deal with problems of poverty. This is an economic argument for "nationalizing" the problem of poverty, or welfare, or elementary education, and it is in principle a good argument.

But I would argue that in making these arguments we are anchored in analyses that no longer hold. There has been a sharp reduction in regional disparities in income in recent decades. Along with this reduction in disparity has come increasing difficulty in deciding which section is "poor" and which is "rich." Are New York and Michigan still "rich" when they show high unemployment rates, declining population, migration of job-seekers to South and West? Are southern states "poor" when the number of jobs increases, their population increases through migration of those seeking work, their unemployment rates are low? The difficulty of relying on traditional measures of which section deserves

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help and which does not is illustrated by the fierce fights over funding formulas in federal programs in Congress and in the claims of states such as New York, through its articulate representative Senator Daniel P. Moynihan, that it is discriminated against in getting its proper share of federal funds, though by certain measures its need is great.

Yet another point may be made on regional differences and their implications for a federal role. Many of these differences are themselves made by regional choices. Welfare is high in New York. It is low in Texas. Undoubtedly this means that industry seeking low-wage labor will find, for this reason alone, a more favorable climate in Texas than in New York. But this is the choice of New York, and of Texas. (I do not underestimate the political realities that make for both those choices.) Is it up to the federal government to "equalize" or "make good" the effect of New York's choice by various social programs which provide more assistance to New York than Texas?

The two points made above—the steady reduction of economic inequality among the states, the increasing political power of minorities—argue forcefully for a reduced federal role in equalization of income and wealth among the states than prevailed in the 1960s and 1970s. And these developments are also relevant to the role of the Reagan administration in enforcement of the civil rights laws.

There is much cant in the argument over civil rights enforcement, on both sides. Civil rights advocates insist that support of busing of school children, for example, is a key measure of commitment to equality. By this measure, the Reagan administration fails. But it is arguable whether busing is anything more today than an expensive and ineffective token, irrelevant to improvement of the education of black children. Similarly, the Reagan administration is unsympathetic to goals and quotas as techniques of enforcing equality in economic opportunity. Undoubtedly these have had some effect in getting jobs, and better jobs, for blacks. Yet there are grave issues of law and principle involved in institutionalizing measures which allocate jobs and scarce places in educational institutions on the basis of race and national origin. The administration wavers between defending the principle of "color-blindness" and insisting it is doing "as much" to promote civil rights as the Carter administration. Of course it is not—if the measures are suits for school busing, for goals and quotas. But it does not feel it to be politically helpful to argue that there are reasons of effectiveness and reasons of principle for its withdrawal from advocacy of such measures. And it would be politically disastrous to make the key argument that the economic and educational level of the black population *now* has very little to do with the level of enforcement of laws against discrimina-

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tory practices, which have declined sharply in the past twenty years, and has much more to do with other factors—many of them internal to the black community—that seem almost impervious to intelligent governmental intervention. After all, the hue and cry over the inadequacies of American and black education today come after twenty years of unparalleled federal intervention.

Which brings us back to the initial point: Social engineering is out of favor with this administration and with the American people, largely because the promises and hopes of twenty years of active federal government have not been fulfilled. But beyond all arguments as to when and whether the federal government should intervene in dealing with social problems, there is the master vision of the Reagan administration as to how societies overcome poverty: They do it on their own, and people do it on their own, and help from government is likely to do more harm than good. That after twenty years of major social programs the black underclass seems as badly off as it was—and possibly is not even proportionately much smaller—and that American education seems to be doing no better, give a certain plausibility to this view. If this is the master vision, then even an argument that demonstrates on the basis of welfare economics or equity that the federal government should act on this or that problem is likely to be met with skepticism: Yes, the poor states may deserve more, and the poor deserve more, but if the *government* tries to provide more, it will not do anyone any good.

And it is that skepticism with government—as well as the desire to save money—that leads to the encouragement of private philanthropy and charity as a means of dealing with the problems of the poor, as well as with other sectors of social policy—education, health, culture—in which the federal contribution is being cut back. With what effect? It is no easy matter to encourage private philanthropy, which already exists on a greater scale in the United States than elsewhere. And reducing the rate of taxation is, as was widely pointed out, an "incentive" to provide less for charity, since the value of the tax exemption declines. But in this area, as in so many, all the returns are not yet in. Contributions to hospitals, universities, and social agencies existed long before there were income taxes and thus an "incentive" to contribute. The economic analysis goes only part way. Need also induces contributions, and philanthropic contributions have held up remarkably, despite the recession. The effect of Reagan administration policies on private giving—reducing the "incentive" on the one hand, increasing the exhortation to give on the other—will be one of the most interesting aspects of a full evaluation of the Reagan administration.

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The impact on the poor

Most of the criticism of the Reagan social policy changes has emphasized one theme, and one alone. Independent policy analysts and partisans alike have again and again pointed out that the cuts have fallen on the poor. I think there is no way of escaping this overall estimate. It is hardly necessary to quote all the summary judgments which tell us this. Richard P. Nathan writes: "The cuts that we made in Federal domestic spending in fiscal year 1982 affected poor people—especially the working poor—more than they affected the treasuries of state and local governments." John L. Palmer and Isabel V. Sawhill, in *The Reagan Experiment*, write: "The net effect of these tax and social program cuts through 1984 will be to provide no significant overall change in the purchasing power of those with incomes below $15,000, modest increases for the broad middle class, and substantial gains for higher-income families. Within the bottom group those receiving benefit payments of one sort or another are likely to find themselves worse off."

One way of interpreting this pattern of social policy is by way of political analysis—who supported the Reagan administration, who runs it. While we can exaggerate—and many do—the differences in education and occupation of Republicans and Democrats, and even right-Republicans and left-Democrats, undoubtedly this is an element. The advocates of the poor play no role in this administration. From this fact one can conclude that a certain blindness to their problems at best, and a positive malice at worst, animates the administration's policies.

I have suggested something else: Ideology animates it, but it is an ideology that operates under constraint. If the economic problems of America (including America's poor) are seen as an absence of sufficient savings for investment, if that is combined with a conviction that government cannot plan investment as well as a multitude of actors in the private sector can, then one has an argument for cuts that help high-income people more than low-income people. I would fault the administration less on its ideology—in view of the difficulties all modern welfare states are suffering, it is at least worth a try—than on its political courage in trying to implement the measures that are necessary to accompany it. If taxes are to be cut, if defense is to be raised, then there will be huge deficits unless non-defense expenditure is brought under control. And here, while the administration has tried, it has achieved as yet hardly anything in bringing the most rapidly growing domestic programs under control. These are, of course, Social Security and Medicare and government and military pensions. I do not under-

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estimate the difficulty of making any headway on these issues. Yet I believe the administration should have tried harder, rather than let the ax fall disproportionately on those programs that did not benefit the broad middle class.

Perhaps it is simply the better or necessary part of political wisdom to give up on these huge "big-ticket" items and to concentrate on those programs that are less well-defended and more easily cut. In any case, this is what the administration has done. Reviewing the income security area, James R. Storey points out: "The expected outlays savings in 1984 arising from 1981 actions . . . are about 4 per cent of projected income security spending under previous policies. . . . Nearly 60 percent occurred in low-income assistance programs, though these account for only 18 percent of income security outlays." Program savings as a percentage of baseline amount is 1.6 percent for OASDI, 0.8 percent for federal employee retirement and disability, as against 16.3 percent for AFDC, 18.6 percent for Food Stamps, 34.5 percent for low income energy assistance. One can make a case for this pattern, of course. But the main explanation is inevitably political.[5]

Against political realities, what can be done? Perhaps nothing, if one expects to govern and win elections. But I would argue the desirability of a greater degree of education to explain where the problems lie. The issue of crass economic self-interest was often raised, and many middle-income people thought they could smugly raise it because they were not that rich. Yet this self-interest was also at work in vast stretches of the middle class, who resisted well-argued reductions in the rate of increase in Social Security and government and military retirement pensions or in aid to students in higher education from middle-income families. There is no question their resistance was rather more effective than that of the advocates of the poor. The next step must be to reduce the growth of these programs.

I would make this case on two grounds. I think in a rich society with a wide array of social programs it is hard to make a case for the poor primarily on grounds of suffering—though there has certainly been some increase. The two other arguments are equity—equal sharing of pain—and effectiveness—cutting big programs is far more effective in bringing the budget under control than cutting small ones. An estimated 1.6 percent reduction in OASDI produced 25.2 percent of the savings in Storey's analysis. And if, as all agree, the enormous deficits are a problem, a willingness to reduce one's take in government benefits must be spread through the wide middle and upper-middle income sections of the population that now benefit from them.

[5] Palmer and Sawhill, *The Reagan Experiment*, pp. 373, 374-75.

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Ideology and intentions

The Reagan administration represented the coming to power of a government with a coherent ideology guiding its actions in social policy. It believed people had no need of sophisticated federal interventions to deal with their problems of poverty, inadequate training for jobs, urban decline, poor education, and the like. Insofar as governmental intervention was necessary or desirable, it should take place on the state and local level. And many of the needs of the poor, and the health, education, welfare, and cultural needs and desires of society, should be met at that level too, and through private philanthropy.

It made no assault on the idea, established in the United States as far back as the 1930s, that government had the responsibility to maintain a "safety net" of basic social programs to provide for the income needs of the destitute, and announced its complete commitment to Social Security to provide for the aged and disabled, unemployment insurance for the unemployed, health insurance for the aged and destitute. The major programs of the 1930s and 1960s were to remain intact. The Reagan administration thus represented the complete acceptance of the New Deal welfare state—but not of the Great Society welfare state, or at least not of all of it. Reagan was neither the Goldwater of 1964, nor the Reagan of earlier campaigns, and his victory was that of a conservatism that accepted the major lineaments of the welfare state. That was not where the main dispute with his opponents lay.

Rather, the originality of the administration lay in its conviction that the way to wealth and national income growth, and out of poverty for the poor, could not be designed by government, or implemented by programs keyed to specific problems. Thus almost all such programs came under attack, whether through efforts to eliminate them, reduce them, or package them in general block grants. If people could manage by themselves, what would be the need for the hundreds of federal programs directed against specific targets, whether immunization for the poor, work training for dropouts, grants for inner-city housing? It may be argued the Reagan administration did believe in a central intelligence guiding society—for how else to explain its conviction that tax cuts would lead to saving, encourage investment, and the like? But this, from the Reagan administration point of view, is what people do naturally—they see their opportunities and seize them. The role of government is to stay out of their way, and that was the point of the tax cuts. Once again, it should be clear I speak of *intentions:* In the event, the tax reduction was riddled with exemptions and incentives designed to do this or that, or reward the earning of income in one

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way rather than another. But that is what happens when a general philosophy meets the specific and concrete interests represented in government, whether in the executive or the legislative branch.

The tax cut, as originally proposed by Mr. Reagan, was to be an across-the-board matter, with no sophisticated efforts to bias it to the well-off and the rich: That happens naturally when one cuts a progressive tax system across the board. In the event, the tax cut ended up less fair, and larger than anticipated. Combined with a recession, and an increase in the rate of the military build-up, the result was huge deficits, never before seen in peacetime, and with potential effects on the economy that were frightening.

Ideological commitments were then reinforced by necessity, and further pressure was put on that part of the non-defense budget that had the least political support. Inevitably, these were programs focused on the poor, even though the major causes of growth in the domestic budget were to be found in benefits growth which went mostly to the middle classes. But, in time, pressure to reduce the growth of these benefits must also come.

There is no escape in a modern developed nation from the major social programs that were created under Franklin D. Roosevelt, and expanded in the years since—Social Security, unemployment insurance, some form of health insurance, which will undoubtedly be expanded to cover populations not yet served. Nor did the Reagan administration wish to move in on these programs. But the programs based on discrete and sophisticated interventions, and built on assumptions as to the effectiveness of certain kinds of incentives, detailed planning, sharply targeted expenditures on specific problems, have been cut and probably further cuts are in store. Undoubtedly a general disillusionment with such programs—not justified in all cases—assists in the dismantling of a good part of the newer social policy thrusts of the 1960s and 1970s.

Nor does one see any support for such programs in the campaign rhetoric of opponents of the Reagan administration. The day of the "laundry list"—the array of new programs for all possible problems and constituencies—seems gone, at least for a while. And its demise must be attributed in good part to the failure of laundry lists to do what they promised to do. The programs grew, in number and scale; the problems remained. A time of respite was due, and it came with the Reagan administration. Perhaps our confidence in our ability to understand our social problems and attack them with specially designed scalpels will return. But three years into the Reagan era, nothing suggests that that day will come soon.

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Meta-policies for mega-government

RICHARD ROSE

BIG government is here to stay. No popularly elected government is going to repeal the social, economic, and defense programs that make government big today. Ironically, even critics of big government find reasons for expanding it; this was demonstrated by the early actions of the Reagan and Thatcher governments, which have unintentionally increased public expenditures. Whatever political perspective is adopted, within the immediately foreseeable future the size of government can only change marginally. The inertia forces that have created big government are not easily stopped or reversed. Even if President Reagan or Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher succeeded in slowing the growth of government, it would still remain big. Keeping government big is not a problem for contemporary politicians; it is a condition that comes with the job.

The big problem: fiscal overload

The biggest problems facing big government today are meta-problems, arising from programs competing for scarce resources. "Fiscal overload," as it has been called, reflects an imbalance in the ratio between government's resources and the inertia of its commitments.

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When government operated on a much smaller scale, the resources of expanding industrial societies far exceeded the claims of the "night-watchman state." If anything, there was an underprovision of public programs. Today, the risk is the opposite. Big government's claims upon society's resources may be growing faster than these resources, thus threatening fiscal overload.

Taken individually, every program commitment of government may have much in its favor: It can be effective and popular with both producers and recipients. Yet, collectively, government can still face great problems, for the whole of government is different from the sum of its parts. In the modern welfare state, someone might argue that a $10 increase in monthly pensions is not difficult for government to pay, because it is such a small sum for each person. But when this sum must be paid twelve times a year, to tens of millions of people, the total is an extremely large sum.

The major meta-problem facing Western governments in the 1980s is clear: how to reconcile the inertia commitments of the welfare state with the finite resources of the society. Of course, the resources of government have always been finite; by definition, economics is about the allocation of limited resources. But the limits are not fixed. In a period of economic boom, like the 1950s and 1960s, the resources of society expand rapidly. In the 1980s the picture is very different: Claims upon resources appear to be expanding without limit, whereas resources are failing to grow as before.

If democratic government is about giving people what they want, then economics is the dismal science of telling people what they can actually have. In managing the modern welfare state, politicians must learn to balance the happy science of politics with the dismal science of economics. While the parameters of the political economy do not prescribe how a nation's resources must be spent, they do restrict how much can be spent. At any given time the sum of resources devoted to the public sector and private sector is fixed. But the national product can grow, and a bigger national product makes it possible for both take-home pay and public programs to increase. Reciprocally, a contracting national product, an occasional but hardly normal phenomenon, compels a reduction in public programs, in take-home pay, or both. A third possibility is that the growth rate either of the public or of the private sector is so great that it forces a reduction in the other sector, claiming the whole fiscal dividend of growth, and then some.

The course of major Western economies from the 1950s to the 1980s has been a gradual progress from treble affluence—a growing national product, a growing public sector, and a growing private sector—to

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Growth in the Western Economies, 1951-80
(average annual rates of growth in constant prices)[1]

Country	National Product	Costs of Public Policy	Take-Home Pay
Germany	6.0%	7.8%	4.3%
Italy	4.5	9.3	3.7
France	4.5	8.3	4.1
Sweden	3.7	6.8	2.3
America	3.1	5.1	2.5
Britain	2.6	4.3	1.7
Average	4.0%	6.9%	3.1%

[1] Source: Calculated from OECD data by procedures set out in Richard Rose and B. Guy Peters, *Can Government Go Bankrupt?* (New York: Basic Books, 1978).

overloaded government. The inertial commitments of government have moved forward slowly but steadily. Consequently, the increasing claims of financing the public sector threaten an absolute, and not just a relative, reduction in the private sector. Between 1951 and 1980, the cost of public programs grew at an average annual rate of 6.9 percent in major Western nations, as against a 4.0 percent average rate of growth in the national product. Growth rates differ in America, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Sweden, but the pattern has been the same: The costs of public programs were growing substantially faster than the economy as a whole (see Table). Thus, take-home pay grew more slowly, averaging 3.1 percent a year.

Past prosperity creates present trouble. The costs of public policy have been growing steadily in constant terms. In the 1950s these costs averaged 29 percent of the national product; a 6.9 percent increase in the cost of public programs required only a 2 percent increase in the national product. In the 1950s Western economies were buoyant, growing on average at a rate of 3.9 percent. In such circumstances, half the fiscal dividend of growth could go to the public sector, and half to the private sector. Public *and* private affluence advanced together, producing what Hugh Heclo has called "policy without pain."

But the cumulative effect of public sector growth has fundamentally altered the distribution of the fiscal dividend. By 1980 the cost of public programs accounted on average for 46.5 percent of national product in major Western nations. The annual growth rate in these programs changed little in the 1970s, averaging 7.1 percent. But much greater economic growth is now required to support these programs, because the public expenditure base is much larger. In 1980 a 7.1 percent increase in the costs of government required economic growth of 3.3

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percent in order to be funded completely by the fiscal dividend of growth. But, on average, economic growth in the major Western nations rose at an annual rate of only 2.5 percent in the 1970s, much less than needed to fund public sector growth out of that dividend. The result is a scissors squeeze.

Fiscal overload is a major concern today because government is financing the rising costs of public programs by cutting take-home pay. In every major Western nation, take-home pay has fallen at least once since 1973, and there has been a steady downward trend in Britain and in Sweden. The pressure on take-home pay varies between nations, but one thing is clear: *The growth of government everywhere threatens a real and continuing reduction in take-home pay in the 1980s.*

The inability of the Western economies to bear painlessly the claims of big government has arisen gradually; it is not the consequence of a single shock event, such as an oil price increase, or a consequence of the unrivaled expansion in spending commitments. Just as it took a decade or more to undo the positive consequences of economic growth, so too it may take a decade or more to deal with the fiscal consequences of overloaded government.

Meta-policies: economic growth

While every Western nation today is concerned about fiscal overload, the size of the problem is surprisingly small. The difference between a balanced and an overloaded economy is equivalent, on average, to 0.8 percent of the national product. If an economy could grow by 0.8 percent more each year (an increase of one-third), take-home pay would be secure. Alternately, if public spending could grow by less than its present rate of growth (2.5 percent of the national product), public programs could continue to expand without causing fiscal overload. This would not remove all the anxieties about the welfare state, but it would resolve the current scissors squeeze.

Meta-policies are required to meet this meta-problem of fiscal overload. Policies affecting *all* programs equally are not easily designed, because those programs differ in their claims upon public resources and in the nature and scope of their benefits. But meta-policies might reduce the pressure on individual programs by putting the brakes on all of them.

The first and most appealing meta-policy is to increase economic growth to at least 3.3 percent in order to finance the increase in public programs. By the standards of the 1950s and 1960s, this rate of growth is attainable, for most Western economies actually grew faster during

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that period. But the growth rates of Western economies from 1951 to 1970 were unprecedentedly high by comparison with the previous century and a half. Even the relatively slow 2.5 percent rate of the 1970s was high by historical standards, surpassing that from 1820 to 1870 (in the boom days of the Industrial Revolution), and from 1913 to 1950, and as high as growth from 1870 to 1913. There is no reason to assume that national economies will cease to grow, but there are theoretical and historical reasons to believe that Western economies are unlikely to grow at a faster rate in the 1980s.

There is a persisting political tendency for governments to overestimate economic growth in order to underestimate fiscal overloading. International forecasts of economic growth tend to be overly optimistic, too. A particularly relevant example is *Towards Full Employment and Price Stability*, a major OECD report produced by a prestigious team of economists in 1977. The report granted that there had been economic difficulties, but argued that they reflected an unusual confluence of unfortunate disturbances, compounded by some avoidable errors in economic policy. It concluded, "reasonably rapid growth remains an appropriate objective." It predicted an annual average growth rate of 4.7 percent among major Western nations from 1975 to 1980. Even though it was not published until halfway through that period, the report nonetheless overshot the target. The actual growth rate was one-third less, 2.9 percent. Furthermore, OECD has usually been forecasting even lower growth in the 1980s.

Placebo policies: borrowing and privatization

Ignoring fiscal overload is a second alternative, since the problem facing a government in any one year is only marginal. Elected officeholders have an immediate incentive to ignore the problem, since strong measures will undoubtedly be unpopular. Especially before a general election, politicians will be anxious to temporize, buying a little time with placebo policies that have no real effect.

Borrowing is the simplest placebo. As the Reagan administration has spectacularly demonstrated, increasing the government deficit allows a government to keep public spending high and simultaneously to cut taxes. From 1970 to 1980, borrowing quadrupled as a proportion of gross national product in most major Western nations, reaching upwards of 15 percent of the gross national product in Italy. Borrowing can buy time in which a government may reorganize its economy, but does not remove the causes of fiscal overload. Gradually, borrowing becomes another cause of fiscal overload, for the cumulative effect of

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increased borrowing is to increase interest payments. In the 1970s government interest payments nearly doubled.

Cutting waste is the most popular placebo, for no politician will defend measures that squander government's resources. But which programs are wasteful? Each has advocates within government among those responsible for providing it, and beneficiaries outside government as well. To attack an entire program as wasteful is to invite a spirited defense. Politicians elected to eliminate waste in government have given unintended testimony to the irrelevance of placebo policies. When Jimmy Carter became President, he pledged to reduce waste in the federal government by reorganization. To this end, he created a large reorganization unit within the Executive Office of the President. Before his term was over, the reorganization office had been abolished without fanfare; it could not deliver the savings Carter had promised. In Britain, Margaret Thatcher's move to Downing Street in 1979 was followed by the appointment of a retail marketing expert, Derek Rayner, as her special advisor on eliminating waste in government. When Lord Rayner (as he became) retired as an advisor, the Conservative government announced annual savings of £170 million, a substantial amount compared to the cost of the Rayner unit. But in comparison to the total cost of British government it is trivial, slightly more than one-tenth of 1 percent of total public expenditure.

Privatization is a placebo policy when it simply alters the delivery of services without reducing public responsibility for funding. Public goods and services can be delivered through a variety of institutional arrangements, including contracts with private, profit-making organizations. Competitive bidding is also assumed to make programs more efficient, thus reducing the cost to government. Even if true—and the evidence in support of the claim is not conclusive—privatization can contribute very little to reducing fiscal overload. The services most often cited as readily amenable to private provision (for example, garbage collection) account for a small proportion of public spending.

Radical privatization, that is, repealing existing programs, could in principle end fiscal overloading by reversing the growth of public spending. But any proposal to repeal a major program will stimulate a defensive reaction from those who support it in principle, or who have an interest in it as providers and beneficiaries. The bigger the potential savings from repeal, the greater the political controversy that would arise.

No political party in the Western world has publicized campaign pledges to make big cuts in the benefits of the contemporary welfare state and won an election in consequence. So-called anti-spending

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parties promise placebo policies. Once in office there is little that they actually do to repeal or reduce the program commitments of government. In 1983 Mrs. Thatcher's Conservative government campaigned for re-election by boasting how *much* it was increasing welfare state expenditure.

Fighting growth from inertia

There is only one alternative left when room for maneuver is exhausted by a failure of the economy to grow, of placebos to produce satisfaction, and of the electorate to endorse a continuing reduction in take-home pay. It is to put the brakes upon the inertial growth of government's resource claims. A reduction in the forward momentum of public expenditure should not be misperceived as a contraction in the scale of government. After the brakes are put on public spending, big government can continue to grow as long as the economy continues to grow. To reduce fiscal overload it is only necessary to brake sufficiently so that the increase in public expenditure does not exceed the increase in the national product.

To put the brakes on public programs immediately raises the question: Which program should grow least, or should the brakes apply to all programs equally? The multiplicity of public programs does not mean that all are equally important. The essential activities of government are relatively few, but crucial. And the means to achieve these ends are more or less common throughout the Western world. Equally important, the claims of these programs upon public resources are relatively small, and the largest program, military defense, has been declining in relative significance. Ministries of foreign affairs require small amounts of money and personnel. A ministry of justice is law-intensive rather than money or manpower-intensive, and the police depend upon voluntary cooperation for the enforcement of the great bulk of laws. Tax collectors are a small portion of total employment, and are cost-effective; for every penny spent on tax collection, a government can reckon to get 50 cents back. In most Western nations, essential services account for a small and declining share of public expenditure; the Reagan administration is exceptional in its desire to boost defense spending.

Government programs intended to mobilize economic resources—for example, building roads, dredging rivers, building houses, or investing in a new nationwide telecommunications grid—involve very effective technologies. A government can be confident that if it allocates money for these programs it will succeed in creating new capital assets.

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Spending upon physical resources, or "infrastructure," can be justified as an investment in a nation's future, expanding the economic base for future tax revenue. To reduce investment in economic infrastructure would not be sensible in the long run, whatever the short-run arguments.

But not all programs to mobilize economic resources result in assets that enlarge the national product. Investment can be risky in the public sector, as in the private. The capital cost of major roads may be repaid by the resulting savings in transportation, but the capital cost of minor roads can only be justified politically, as a contribution to national integration, to national defense, or to electoral victory. This is also true of some glamorous high technology investments. For example, the Anglo-French investment in the supersonic Concorde jet proved to be a technical success but an economic disaster, because the revenue from operating Concorde does not begin to cover its cost. Some programs classified as economic services are not intended to generate economic growth, but to subsidize producers in declining industries, or marginal producers in agriculture. There are marginal savings that could be made by putting the brakes upon (or even cutting) subsidies to inefficient producers, but any major changes would risk reducing economic growth and electoral retribution.

Social welfare programs are most likely to be affected if the brakes are put on public expenditure. They are the biggest government programs, and have been growing fastest. Moreover, we do not know how effective some of them are; we can only be sure of how much they cost. We do not know whether a marginal increase or decrease in spending produces a proportionate increase or decrease in benefits, or no change at all. A reduction, say, in the number of public employees or new buildings for welfare services is not evidence of a reduction in welfare. To argue that teachers whose earnings do not keep up with inflation thus become less effective workers is to rely upon a crass, materialist model of social welfare.

In education, the growth of expenditure has been triggered as much by the broadening of educational aims as by demographic expansion. As long as education concentrated upon relatively narrow aims, such as instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic, its effectiveness was high. But when education expands its aims to include a variety of socialization goals, such as promoting social mobility or reducing interclass tensions, its effectiveness is reduced, since the school has no monopoly of social influence. A simple criterion for putting the brakes on education spending would be to squeeze first those programs not central to instruction.

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The connection between health-care expenditures and the health of a nation is even more uncertain. Doctors and hospitals concentrate upon treating people who *lack* health. The remedial work of restoring health to the unhealthy is very different from a positive health program. Many of the measures conducive to good health do not involve doctors or hospitals, but require the unpaid cooperation of individuals—for example, attention to diet, exercise, and moderation in drinking and smoking. Medical uncertainties about health treatment also imply that putting the brakes on the expansion of health expenditure would not affect health at the margin. Especially in the United States, the escalation in health costs in the past has not been accompanied by an equal escalation in good health.

The best example of an effective social policy, with program outputs directly related to inputs, is the old age pension. The service is simple: Government gives money to all persons who can prove entitlement by producing a birth certificate or a record of pension contributions. Government does not specify what old people need, or dictate what they must consume. Instead, it gives the elderly money income, and pensioners are left to spend the money. Within the limits of the market, pensioners can buy what they think is most appropriate for their needs and circumstances. The administrative cost of pensions is small, though the total expenditure is great. Governments must expect spending on pensions to accelerate rather than decelerate, for the number of elderly is increasing in almost every Western nation.

Across-the-board strategies

Whichever programs are selected for reduction, their proponents are bound to protest. Spending has increased so steadily in the past that it creates expectations among public employees and their clients. Expanding any given program less than the average amount of expansion may be viewed as discriminatory. The larger the program, the greater the number of public employees and beneficiaries who can be expected to mobilize in protest against what is misperceived as a "budget cut."

Given these political difficulties, policymakers may instead prefer non-discriminatory, across-the-board limitations on all programs. Across-the-board measures, such as freezing the number of employees or placing cash limits upon spending without regard to the rate of inflation, are indiscriminate because they make no allowance for differences between programs. But they are politically attractive because of the apparent equity of imposing a little restraint upon everybody. This

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prevents the proponents of any particular program from claiming that they have been treated differently from others.

Cash limits are necessary in every fiscal system. In classical budgeting, cash limits were all-important; the budget authorized spending a fixed sum of money, and that was that. As inflation began to erode the purchasing power of money, budgeting in volume terms was developed. Instead of fixing a cash limit, an agency could be authorized to spend whatever was needed to purchase a fixed volume of goods and services, whatever the price increase. Volume budgeting is intended to stabilize services, but it does so by destabilizing the amount of money government is committed to spend.

British experience illustrates the significance of the two budgeting methods. In the 1960s the British government turned to volume budgeting as part of a planned expansion of government programs. In 1976 the Labor government introduced cash limits on spending to prevent continuing escalation, and in 1981 the Conservative government returned to budgeting in current cash instead of volume terms.

Cash limits do not mean a reduction in public spending. In an inflationary period, this year's limit is almost invariably higher than last year's, and next year's limit becomes higher still. Nor do cash limits prescribe which part of a given program should be squeezed to stay within a limit. Program managers are left to work out their own procedures for getting by without the supplementary increases that they could expect with volume budgeting. For example, in public transport, it may mean fewer trains and buses, and in the postal service fewer mail deliveries.

However, cash limits cannot be enforced easily, given the inertia of the contemporary welfare state. Any attempt to be non-selective inevitably ends up becoming selective, since programs differ in the extent to which spending can be controlled. Pensions and unemployment programs entitle individuals to benefits as a statutory right; when people live longer or more people become unemployed, expenditures will rise. When transfer payments or the wages of public employees are indexed against inflation, increases will exceed any cash limits set below the rate of inflation. An attempt to apply cash limits will inevitably end up discriminating between the controllable, and the uncontrollable.

Increasing charges for particular benefits favors those programs provided without charge. Every Western nation makes some charges for each of its major welfare services, but none recovers the full cost from those who directly benefit. The arguments for or against charging are often cast in ideological terms, but the practical question is: What are the effects of charging for services? The immediate consequences are that revenue will be increased and demand reduced, if only slightly.

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Insofar as a reduction in demand leads to some reduction in aggregate costs, then charging will make a double contribution to reducing fiscal overload, adding to revenue and subtracting from expenditure. The extent of savings can be exaggerated. But equally important is the information that budgetmakers gain, for charges convey market signals about the relative strength of demand for different services.

A government worried about fiscal overload will not be anxious to promote new programs, yet without doing so it is confined solely to maintaining what it inherits from its predecessors. The primary concern of an overloaded finance ministry will be to avoid new long-term commitments, for it is the cumulative increase in such commitments that creates fiscal overloading. Insofar as a budget ministry delegates to operating agencies the discretion to shift expenditure within overall budget targets, then program managers may finance a few new programs by cutting back others.

One-time measures are non-recurring by definition. The advantage of hosting the Olympic Games is that, whatever its cost, it will not recur. The sponsoring country is disqualified from acting as a host for a quarter-century or longer. The same advantage holds for celebrating a Royal Jubilee or a national bicentennial. Collective goods, provided at fixed cost regardless of the number of users, also have advantages. For example, a cost-conscious government would be better advised to spend money for an additional television channel, where costs are more or less fixed whatever the number of viewers, than for community theatres, where the cost of providing plays tends to rise in proportion to the audience.

Capital expenditure programs, involving multi-year but non-recurring investment in public facilities, can be chosen according to their cost implications for future expenditure. When fiscal overload is the problem, then capital expenditure should favor measures that do not require a high level of recurrent expenditure; for example, roads involve a heavy capital cost but have low maintenance costs, whereas hospitals or universities are expensive to maintain as well as to build. Where charges can be imposed, the case for spending is stronger still, favoring toll motorways or bridges as against city streets, and municipal swimming pools or cinemas (for which an entrance charge is made) as against municipal libraries provided without charge.

Selling the new austerity

Will people accept a reduction in the rate of growth of public spending on select welfare state programs? Public opinion surveys show that there is a readiness to accept marginal alterations in public programs,

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because many people are ambivalent about the role of the welfare state. Richard Coughlin thus summarizes his wide-ranging review of public opinion in eight European countries and the United States:

> Public attitudes toward the broad principles of social policy have developed along similar lines, both of acceptance and rejection. The idea of collective responsibility for assuring minimum standards of employment, health care, income and other conditions of social and economic well-being has everywhere gained a foothold in popular values and belief. And yet the survey evidence suggests a simultaneous tendency supporting individual achievement, mobility and responsibility for one's own lot. The prevailing ideological climate in each of the eight nations is mixed and is not dominated by extremes.[1]

People do not expect the world perpetually to get better, and themselves to get richer and richer. That explains why there is little frustration with the government's inability to make things better, and widespread popular acceptance of public expenditure limits in both President Reagan's America and President Mitterand's France. Even in the late 1960s, at the height of affluence, people were more inclined to expect a steady living than an ever-enlarged cornucopia of benefits. After a decade of disillusionment many people have come to expect things to get worse, not better. Public opinion surveys show that there is a widespread expectation of rising prices, rising unemployment, and increased taxes. Government can, and often unwittingly does, meet these negative expectations.

When people expect conditions to get worse, government need only keep things as they are in order to do better than popular expectations. As long as there is some positive growth in the economy, then government does not need to force a cut in take-home pay in order to sustain welfare programs. As long as people expect things to get worse and they do not, then government can benefit from popular relief when conditions are not as bad as anticipated.

The great majority of citizens in the West today enjoys a far higher standard of living than did their parents. Standards of living have been rising thanks to increased take-home pay and increased public expenditure on services people want. Coping with the growth in government does not involve an ideological transformation, nor does it mean the apocalyptic end of society as we know it. However, when the inertia of public spending at all levels of government is well past the trillion dollar mark, coping requires a clear understanding of what is and is not possible in the modern welfare state.

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[1] Richard M. Coughlin, *Ideology, Public Opinion and Welfare Policy* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies Research Series No. 42, 1980), p. 31.

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A new approach to child support

IRWIN GARFINKEL & ELIZABETH UHR

Is it in the public interest for the government to collect child support from parents who live apart from their children? Two facts taken together suggest the importance of the answer to this question. First, children with absent parents are a sizable and growing proportion of the population: One in five American children now lives apart from one parent.[1] Because of increasing rates of divorce, separation, and out-of-wedlock births, it is estimated that nearly half of all children born today will spend part of their first 18 years in a family headed by a single mother.[2] Second, approximately half of all children in families headed by women are poor.[3] In other words, if present trends continue, about one in four American children will experience poverty before age 18.

[1] See Footnote 1 in Irwin Garfinkel and Marygold Melli, *Child Support: Weaknesses of the Old and Features of a Proposed New System*, Volume I (Madison: University of Wisconsin, Institute for Research on Poverty, 1982).

[2] See the statistical appendix in Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "Welfare Reform's 1971-72 Defeat: A Historic Loss," *Journal of the Institute for Socioeconomic Studies* 6 (Spring 1981): 1–20. His estimate applies to children living in single-parent families. Since some of these result from widowhood, the percentage eligible for child support will be smaller.

[3] See *Characteristics of the Population below the Poverty Level: 1980*, Current Population Reports, Consumer Income Series P-60, No. 133 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1982), Table 11.

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Child support today

The current child-support system consists of two major parts: the family court, and welfare. The former establishes responsibility to pay support, sets the amount of support to be paid, and enforces the parent's obligation to pay. The latter provides cash and in-kind benefits to poor children and their custodial parents. Because of recent federal initiatives, these two systems are becoming increasingly intertwined.

Family law is traditionally a province of the states. In most, the obligation of absent parents to pay child support is explicitly stated in statute. The amount to be paid, however, is determined on a case-by-case basis, and the guidelines that exist are very general. For example, the Wisconsin statute instructs courts to apply the following criteria in determining the amount of child support: the financial resources of the child; the financial resources of both parents; the standard of living the child would have enjoyed had the marriage not ended in annulment, divorce, or legal separation; the desirability that the custodian remain in the home as a full-time parent; the cost of day care if the custodian works outside the home, or the value of custodial services performed by the custodian if the custodian remains in the home; the physical and emotional health needs of the child; the child's educational needs; the tax consequences to each party; and any other factors that the court deems relevant. In short, the courts have tremendous discretion.

In some jurisdictions, judges use a child-support obligation schedule, which is similar to a tax table. Most counties in Michigan, for example, use only two facts to determine child support: the absent parent's income and the number of children owed support. But such schedules are the exception rather than the rule.

In a few states, such as Michigan and Wisconsin, a government agency has the authority to initiate legal action when child-support obligations are not met. The Michigan Friend of the Court, founded in 1917, is the oldest such agency. Still, except for welfare cases, in which the state rather than the custodial parent gets the proceeds from child-support collections, these government agencies usually do not use their authority unless specifically requested to do so by the custodial parent.[4] In most cases, the burden of collecting overdue support falls to the custodial parent.

The most effective child-support enforcement tool is a wage assignment—a legal order to the employer of the absent parent to withhold a specified amount from the employee's wages. Wage assignments are

[4]David L. Chambers, *Making Fathers Pay: The Enforcement of Child Support* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 139.

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being used more frequently. Wisconsin, for example, now requires that a contingent wage assignment be issued in all cases. The county Clerk of Courts (to whom all child-support payments are made) has the legal authority to order wage assignments once child-support payments are ten days delinquent. In practice, however, Clerks do not pursue delinquencies in welfare cases for three to four months. Moreover, they take no initiative in non-welfare cases.

The ultimate sanction for those who do not pay is jail. In Michigan, thousands of absent fathers are jailed each year for failing to comply with child-support orders.[5] While jailing appears to be used throughout the rest of the country, there are no data to indicate how frequently it is employed.

The second part of the child-support system is Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the oldest and most important public welfare program for poor children and their custodial parents. In 1935, when AFDC was created by the Social Security Act, eligible "dependent children" included those who lost the earnings of a parent because of death, disability, or absence. Initially, the program paid benefits only to children, but in 1950 it was amended to include benefits for the custodial parent. And in 1961, states were also permitted to provide aid to dependent children whose fathers were unemployed. When AFDC was enacted, most of the children who benefited were orphans. Now, the overwhelming majority of the children's mothers are divorced or separated, or have not been married (in 1979, 38 percent of AFDC mothers were unwed); widows constitute less than 2 percent of the AFDC caseload.

In 1981, AFDC accounted for 17 percent of total welfare expenditures and paid benefits to 11 million custodial parents and children, most of whom were potentially eligible for child support. In addition to cash benefits, most AFDC families also receive Food Stamps and Medicaid. If benefits from these and other welfare programs are included, then approximately half of all welfare expenditures are devoted to families potentially eligible for child support.

A national concern

As noted above, in 1935 most single mothers were widows. As AFDC cases began to reflect the demographic trends of divorce, separation, desertion, and out-of-wedlock births, congressional interest in child-support payments grew. In 1950, Congress enacted the first federal child-support legislation. This required state welfare agencies to notify

[5]Chambers, *Making Fathers Pay*, p. 316.

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law enforcement officials when a child receiving AFDC benefits had been abandoned. Other legislation, enacted in 1965 and 1967, required states to enforce child support and establish paternity, and allowed them to request the addresses of absent parents from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW).

The most significant legislation was enacted in 1975, when Congress added Part D to Title IV of the Social Security Act, thereby establishing the Child Support Enforcement (or IV-D) program. Again, responsibility for running the program rests with the states, which are reimbursed by the federal government for 75 percent of the cost of establishing paternity, locating absent fathers, and collecting child support.

Use of the IRS to collect child support owed to AFDC beneficiaries was authorized by the 1975 law. In 1980, this use was extended to non-AFDC families; and new legislation in 1981 required the IRS to withhold tax refunds in cases where states certified that the individual owed child support that was past due. Because of these national measures, by fiscal year 1981 IV-D collections amounted to $1.6 billion—nearly a threefold increase since 1976.

More legislation is pending. In November, 1983, the House of Representatives adopted unanimously (422-0) a bill requiring all states that receive federal AFDC funds to withhold child support from the wages of absent parents whose payments are delinquent for one month. It also required the appointment of Blue Ribbon commissions to devise state-wide standards for child support. It now appears that a bill similar to the version in the House will be passed by the Senate and signed by the President. It is clear that the federal government has already seen fit to intrude into an area of family law traditionally controlled by the states. And as we shall see, the weaknesses of the current system surely justify the national concern over child support. The problems inherent in this system are documented in national statistics. Only 59 percent of eligible women receive child-support awards. Nearly 90 percent of unmarried women, and half of those who are separated, receive no award. For divorced women, the statistics are more encouraging; yet even here, one in five fails to get an award. Moreover, of all children awarded support in 1978, only 49 percent received the full amount due them, and 28 percent received nothing.[6]

The inequity of the system stems directly from its toleration of irresponsibility—a problem compounded by capricious enforcement of the

[6] *Child Support and Alimony: 1978*, Current Population Reports, Special Studies Series, P-23, No. 112 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, September 1981).

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law. More absent fathers than not pay no child support. Most who do not pay suffer no consequences. Yet others, albeit a small percentage, are sent to jail. The amount of support an absent parent pays depends not just on the ability to pay, but on the varying attitudes of local judges, district attorneys, and welfare officials, the beliefs and attitudes of both parents, the current relationship between the parents, and the skill of their respective lawyers. Nearly every absent parent can find someone earning more who pays less. And nearly every custodial parent knows someone who is receiving more though the child's father earns less. This and the absence of firm legislative guidelines make child support a major source of continuing tension between many former spouses.

Finally, our welfare system, in relieving poverty, encourages dependency. Almost all of the poor in female-headed households receive welfare, and the overwhelming majority of mothers on welfare do not work. Given the confiscatory tax rates on earnings in the AFDC program, this is not surprising. Because AFDC, like any welfare program, is designed to aid only the poor, benefits are reduced when earnings increase. After four months on a job, a woman on AFDC faces a benefit reduction of a dollar for every dollar that she earns. That is equivalent to a 100 percent tax on earnings. What we give with one hand, we take away with the other. Yet because they have little education and experience, and would have child-care expenses if they did work, most women on AFDC could not earn enough to lift their families from poverty even if they worked full time. If they also received child support from the children's absent father, some but not all of these families would attain an income above the poverty level. Clearly, the only way to alleviate this kind of poverty without creating dependency is to supplement rather than replace the earnings of these custodial parents.

A social child-support system

These problems with the current system lead us to propose a social child-support program in its place. We begin by observing that any new child-support system should ensure that parents share their income with their children; establish equitable amounts for absent parents to pay; collect payments efficiently; increase the economic well-being of children who have absent parents; encourage independence; and reduce welfare costs and caseloads. A new system should also avoid burdening taxpayers, overtaxing absent parents, and worsening the economic predicament of AFDC beneficiaries.

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We believe that a social child-support system would both fulfill the objectives and satisfy the constraints. Under it, all parents who live apart from their children would be liable for a child-support tax, which would be levied on their gross income. The rate would be proportional, according to the number of children who must be supported. The tax would be collected through paycheck withholding, as social security and income taxes are. All children with a living absent parent would be entitled to benefits equal either to the child-support tax paid by the absent parent, or a minimum benefit, whichever is higher. Should the absent parent pay less than the minimum, the difference would be financed out of general revenues, and the custodial parent would be subject to a small surtax up to the amount of the public subsidy.

The social child-support program outlined below is based on the principle that individuals who become parents incur the obligation to share their incomes with their children. By promoting parental responsibility, establishing equitable child-support payments, alleviating poverty, and encouraging independence among single-parent families, such a program should rectify the four chief defects of the child-support system in place in most states today.

The payments. Every parent who lives apart from his children would be required to share his income with them. The amount of child support owed would be specified by law. It would depend on two factors only: the income of the absent parent and the number of children to be supported. A percentage would be taken from the first $60,000 of the absent parent's gross income. The amount of this percentage (the tax rate) would be based upon estimates of what two-parent families spend on their children, taking into account the additional expenses of maintaining two households instead of one. Consequently, a higher percentage would be taken for the first child than for subsequent children, with the percentage approaching zero by the fifth child—for example, 17 percent for one child, 25 percent for two children, 29 for three, 31 for four, 32 for five, and 33 for six or more. The tax rate and tax base would not be altered if either parent remarried or if the absent parent started a new family.

This single sweeping change—a legislated formula for child support—should eliminate many of the worst evils of the current system. First, it would be "horizontally" equitable, since, although the amount of child support paid would differ from case to case, absent parents with the same income and the same number of children would pay the same amount. Second, removing child support from the domain of the judiciary would make it readily accessible to all single-parent families; the custodial parent would need only to apply in order to participate

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in the program. (The justification for transferring jurisdiction from the judiciary to the legislative branch is simple: Child support belongs under the control of taxpayers, who already provide for children whose absent parents do not pay sufficient support.) Third, this formula would reduce one of the principal conflicts between parents who are separated by eliminating the possibility of dispute over the size of the child-support payments.

At least two objections have been raised to a legislated formula for determining support obligations. The first is that it is impossible to capture the unique circumstances of individuals in a formula. While this is certainly true, it is a complaint that applies to taxes no less than to child support—and no one suggests that judges make individual determinations of each taxpayer's ability to pay. The second objection is that, given that most middle- and upper-income parents who divorce reach agreements outside of court that judges simply approve, why try to fix something that is already working? To deal with this objection, the legislation could be designed so that the formula only takes effect when the custodial parent applies for either a minimum benefit or welfare. But the real question remains: How well *is* the current system working? According to conventional measures of horizontal equity, the answer is: not very well.

Expecting even low-income absent parents to pay child support may seem harsh. At present, the overwhelming majority of those with low incomes pay no child support. It has been suggested that they simply cannot afford to contribute. They may, for instance, have other economic responsibilities; they may even be unemployed. Yet if we are to uphold the principle that all parents must share their income with their children, poor absent parents cannot be an exception. Since they would be required to pay only a percentage of their incomes, their contribution would fall to zero when they were unemployed, and when they were employed their contribution would be small. Granted, even a small payment could create hardship for them and the new families they may have. However, if this program became law, absent parents would anticipate the drain on their incomes and prepare for it (for example, by curtailing the size of their new families). In any event, any new spouse of an absent parent would understand that inviolable economic commitments had been made to a previous family.

Collecting child support. Experience with the current system has shown that only the most stringent measures will succeed in collecting child-support payments from absent parents. The question is, how committed are we to enforcing the obligation of absent parents to share their income with their children? If we are very committed, we will

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require employers to withhold child-support payments from wages. We already know that withholding for income and payroll taxes attests to the effectiveness of withholding in general. Wisconsin's experience with wage withholding attests to the effectiveness of withholding for child-support collections. The principal reason for advocating wage withholding for child support, therefore, is that it has been proved in practice. Moreover, wage withholding for child support is preferable to the alternatives. It is certainly better than jailing; and it is also better than merely improving the response to delinquent child-support payments.

We have already noted that a number of states use wage assignments when child-support payments are delinquent. This technique is less intrusive than universal withholding, for it avoids government intervention except in cases of delinquency. However, the wage assignment system is much too inefficient to accomplish the goals of universal withholding. Not only is there a customary lag of several months after delinquency before wages are withheld, but in some cases—when, for example, a father is determined not to pay—hearings and job shifts can postpone withholding (and payments) indefinitely. Furthermore, since the vast majority of absent parents is delinquent, a wage assignment system, if it were truly efficient, would end up covering almost as many absent parents as a universal system. (In Wisconsin four out of five absent parents of children on AFDC in 1980 missed required payments at least one month, and the annual payment records of absent fathers whose children are not on AFDC does not appear to be much better.) It is surely better to devise means to prevent citizens from becoming criminals than to punish them after the fact.

Wage withholding has its drawbacks, of course. It deprives the wage-earner of the right to decide how a portion of his income is spent. Withholding for child-support payments also constitutes an invasion of the absent parent's privacy. Yet there appears to be a consensus that, in the case of child support, the public interest and the interests of children outweigh the rights of their parents to economic freedom and privacy. This consensus is reflected quite clearly in the government initiatives discussed earlier.

Another drawback of a withholding system—and one more difficult to assess—is the burden it places on employers, who would deduct the appropriate amount from an employee's wages and transfer it to the government agency. Still, given that employers already have to withhold for income and social security taxes, and given the increasing efficiency of computerized payrolls, the additional bookkeeping should not be very burdensome.

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Benefits. Every child living in a household from which one parent was absent would receive either the amount paid by the absent parent or a minimum guaranteed payment, whichever was larger. Since the benefit would be paid for the child, rather than the custodial parent, the income of the custodial parent would not affect the amount of payment. The benefit would be adjusted regularly to remain at a fixed percentage of the absent parent's income, while the minimum benefit would be adjusted to reflect the growth in the economy. If the payment from the absent parent was not large enough to cover the minimum benefit, the custodial parent would be taxed (at a rate lower than that charged the absent parent) up to the amount of the public subsidy.

The argument for a minimum benefit is twofold. First, it would reduce the risk to children whose absent parents were unemployed. In such cases, child-support payments would fall only to the minimum, not to zero. Second, the minimum benefit, combined with a few thousand dollars of earnings, would lift most single-parent households out of poverty and remove them from welfare. Custodial parents going to work would not face a dollar-for-dollar reduction in their child-support payments, as they do today under AFDC. Any reduction in their payments would be small, and would occur only if the absent parent was paying less than the minimum benefit. Thus custodial parents would have the usual incentive for acquiring jobs—the knowledge that by so doing they would be enhancing the well-being of their families.[7] Also, benefits would no longer be seen as charity, but as contributions to which all children in single-parent families were entitled; thus, they would not demean the recipients. AFDC, with its built-in negative incentives, should dwindle into a program of last resort for a destitute few.

At first glance, it may appear grossly unfair that a parent who is living with her children and therefore unavoidably contributing to their maintenance should be taxed when the payment from the absent parent is less than the minimum benefit. But even if the custodial parent pays the full minimum benefit, she is not losing money, but simply breaking even. And of course custodial parents would not have to pay the full minimum benefit unless they had sizable incomes of their own. (Although many absent parents—who are almost always men—are better off than custodial parents, this is not always the case. Why should the

[7] Child support enforcement, like a tax, has offsetting effects on the incentive to work. On one hand, the reduction in income induces more work; on the other, the reduction in the reward for work induces less work. Most research suggests that for males the income effect outweighs the price effect. But research also indicates that the net effect is small; see Stanley Masters and Irwin Garfinkel, *Estimating Labor Supply Effects of Income Maintenance Alternatives* (New York: Academic Press, 1978).

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Estimated Costs and Savings of Alternative Social Child-Support Plans (Wisconsin, 1980)[1]

	PLAN 1	PLAN 2	PLAN 3
(1) Tax Rate on Absent Parent (1-6 Children)	17-33%	13-28%	13-28%
(2) Minimum Benefit	$3500-7500	$3500-7500	$2500-6500
(3) Total Benefits (millions)	834	767	653
(4) Total Revenues from Absent Parents (millions)[2]	551	437	437
(5) Total Revenues from Custodial Parents (millions)	99	100	76
(6) Savings from Reduction in AFDC Cost (millions)	256	249	216
(7) Net Savings (millions)[3]	72	19	76

[1] These estimates are derived from a combination of two sets of data: the Wisconsin Basic Needs Study (BNS), a random sample of the Wisconsin population which sampled the poor and female-headed population; and a 4 percent sample of children on AFDC eligible for child support taken from the Wisconsin Computer Reporting Network of AFDC clients (CRN), a computerized file of all Wisconsin AFDC beneficiaries. The BNS was used for the calculations for non-AFDC beneficiaries and the CRN for AFDC beneficiaries.

[2] To predict the income of absent parents, we developed a crude estimate assuming first that absent parents have the same race, age, and years of schooling as the custodial parent, and, second, that the absent parent earns the same amount of income as the average man with the same race, age, and education. For more details on the methodology, see pp. 45-77 and 142-155 in Volume III of Garfinkel and Melli, *Child Support*. (Note, however, that the data sources used for the estimates in Garfinkel and Melli are older than those used for the results presented here.)

[3] To arrive at these figures, add revenue from absent parents, revenue from custodial parents, and savings from reduction in the cost of AFDC; then subtract total benefits.

taxpayers subsidize the children of a custodial parent who earns $30,000 or $40,000 per year? That is hardly fair; bear in mind that the government does not contribute directly to child support for two-parent families, no matter how hard up they may be.)

Taxing the custodial parent when the payment from the absent parent is smaller than the minimum benefit also minimizes the incentive for families to split up in a manner that maximizes the state's contribution to the household. The decision of who should live with the children should be made on other grounds. Finally, taxing custodial parents would help keep the costs of the program down.

What would it cost?

The costs and benefits of this new social child-support system would depend upon the tax rate on absent and custodial parents, the level of the child-support minimum benefit, and the effectiveness of child-support collections. Estimated benefits, costs, and savings in Wisconsin of three alternative social child-support plans are given in the Table.

The first two lines describe the different plans: both the tax rate on the absent father (as a percentage of his gross income up to $60,000), and the minimum benefit depend upon the number of children owed support. Line (3) is the total cost of the benefits paid to these children.

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Line (4) is the total amount collected from absent parents. Line (5) is the total amount collected from custodial parents. This tax is imposed only when the tax on the absent parent is not sufficient to cover the minimum benefit. The tax rate on the custodial parent is one-half the tax rate on the absent parent, up to the amount of the minimum benefit. Line (6) is the reduction in the cost of AFDC that would result from implementing each child support plan. In most AFDC cases, child-support benefits will be less than AFDC benefits. In these cases AFDC savings equal the child-support benefit.[8] In cases where the child-support benefit exceeds the AFDC benefit, the AFDC savings equal the AFDC benefit. Line (7) gives the net savings for each of the three plans: the cost of benefits is subtracted from the total collected in taxes and the savings from AFDC. "Net savings" gives what is commonly referred to as "the bottom line."

These estimates indicate that if Wisconsin had had a social child-support system in 1980 with tax rates on absent parents equal to 17, 25, 29, 31, 32, and 33 percent of gross income for one, two, three, four, five, and six or more children respectively (Plan 1), the state could have afforded to pay a minimum child-support benefit of $3,500 for the first child, $5,000 for two, $6,000 for three, $7,000 for four, and $7,500 for five or more children—and *still* could have saved Wisconsin and the federal government $72 million (provided that the state collected 100 percent of what absent parents owed). That is, given what most people would consider reasonable child-support tax rates, the state could provide a very generous minimum benefit and still save one-fifth of its current AFDC budget. If the child support tax seems too high, it could be cut (see Plan 2). The state could still afford the same generous benefit levels, but would save only $19 million. If the state chose to save more—say $76 million—for general taxpayers, it could still provide minimum benefits of $2,500, $4,000, $5,000, $6,000, and $6,500 (Plan 3). This is possible, however, only if the state collects 100 percent of the absent parents' obligation.

The trade-offs worsen severely as enforcement of the support obligation weakens. If the poorest fifth of the absent-parent population pays nothing, a program with rates starting at 17 percent and minimum benefits at $3,500 would save taxpayers only $24 million. And if we collect no child support from the poorest 40 percent of absent parents (which is still better than we are doing now), the state would have to spend $50 million more than it is now spending. Why absent parents

[8] As argued in the text, however, many of those on AFDC will leave welfare because the child-support benefit plus earnings will provide them with higher income than they could achieve on welfare. Our estimates of AFDC savings are conservative in that they do not incorporate this work incentive effect.

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in Wisconsin should pay millions less than they owe in child-support so that they and everyone else have to pay millions more in taxes is beyond us, and we suspect it is beyond others as well.

A demonstration

A demonstration is now under way in Wisconsin to determine whether social child support will prove as beneficial in practice as the numbers in the previous section suggest. A child-support formula and wage withholding are now being used in several counties. As of January 1986, according to current plans, a minimum benefit and a tax on custodial parents (when the absent parent pays less than the minimum benefit) will be tried in several counties.

This test will tell us a number of things. First, we shall find out if social child support increases child-support collection and reduces poverty and dependence among single-parent families. We shall also get realistic measures of the administrative and operating costs of such a program and the amount that can be saved by reducing AFDC expenditures. Any unforeseen defects of the design will soon become apparent. Finally, by monitoring the changes that occur in the behavior of custodial and absent parents under this new and less adversarial arrangement, we will find out if there are additional (non-financial) benefits for children and their parents. We will answer the questions about social child support by comparing counties that participate in the demonstration with those that do not and by comparing the results in each participating county with those it achieved before the demonstration.

Is it in the public interest for the government to collect child support from parents who live apart from their children? The contrast between the dismal reality of the existing system and the bright promise of social child support suggest so. The numbers in the previous section suggest it as well. The only remaining question is whether experience will confirm it.

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Pollution deadlines and the coalition for failure

R. SHEP MELNICK

At first the activity on the floor of the House of Representatives seemed ordinary enough. Representative Henry Waxman (D-California), chairman of the subcommittee with jurisdiction over the Clean Air Act, and one of Congress's staunchest supporters of rigorous environmental regulation, was engaged in yet another battle with his formidable committee chairman, Representative John Dingell (D-Michigan), known to some as "Tailpipe Johnny" for his annual efforts to relax auto emission standards. But this time something had gone awry. Waxman was endorsing an appropriation bill rider that would prevent the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from imposing a construction ban on states failing to meet the Clean Air Act's 1982 deadline for attaining health-based air quality standards. He and his allies railed against former EPA Administrator Anne Gorsuch Burford's threat to impose such a ban in the 213 counties throughout the nation that exceeded those standards, calling her action "heavy-handed" and advising her successor to be more "flexible" in accommodating states that make "good faith" efforts to comply with the act. Dingell—who in 1982 led an effort to weaken the entire Clean Air Act—opposed Waxman's rider, warning, "If you vote for this amendment, you are voting for dirty air." No wonder one House member announced that she was "astounded at this debate" of June 2, 1983, and another admitted to being "totally confused."

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The paradox of Clean Air Act opponents asking for rigorous enforcement, and supporters calling for administrative flexibility, becomes all the more striking when one considers the history of the act. Ever since its passage in 1970, the Clean Air Act has been billed as an "action forcing" statute. In place of vague commands to regulate in the "public interest" or to establish "reasonable" or "feasible" requirements, one finds in the act explicit, often numerical standards coupled with strict time limits. The requirement that auto makers reduce new car emissions by 90 percent within five years was the most visible element of this regulatory strategy. Such clear standards, environmental advocates have maintained, protect Congress's prerogative to set public policy, prevent agency "capture" or mismanagement, and allow citizens to seek relief in court whenever administrators fail to do their job. If ever an agency was in need of supervision it was the EPA under Administrator Gorsuch. Not only were the political executives appointed by President Reagan hostile to many of the statutes they were charged with carrying out; they were also frequently incompetent and, in at least one case, even dishonest. This hardly seemed to be the year for environmental advocates to put their trust in administrative discretion.

These unexpected positions, however, become understandable once one examines the immediate political context. The 97th Congress had witnessed a long and acrimonious battle over the revision of the Clean Air Act. Considering the act far too restrictive, the Reagan administration and many sectors of the business community sought to revise it as soon as possible. Environmental groups and congressional sponsors of the legislation of 1970 and 1977, in contrast, remained satisfied with the basic structure of the act and opposed any set of amendments that failed to tackle such growing problems as acid rain and airborne carcinogens. By the end of 1982, weeks of committee hearings and markups had produced only stalemate. Administrator Gorsuch saw that an announcement of the construction ban was a convenient way of forcing Congress to open the act to amendment. There can be little doubt but that her actions were, as environmentalists charged, "politically motivated." At the same time, however, her opponents' efforts to delay the sanction were motivated by an equally political calculation of legislative strategy. They were determined to block any action until the political climate became more favorable to environmental protection. They were also willing to gamble that their cause would find more support after—or just before—the 1984 election. Meanwhile, they wanted no one to rock the boat.

Even before the appropriations rider became law, Gorsuch's replacement, William Ruckelshaus, announced that he opposed rapid, whole-

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sale application of the construction ban. If this solved the immediate difficulties of the environmental advocates, it only highlighted their long-standing problem. Congress and the EPA once again showed that they would not stand behind the standards and deadlines previously announced with great seriousness. Every major participant now knows that loopholes will always appear in the nick of time, thus obviating the need to impose sanctions in areas that fail to meet air quality standards. Yet the charade continues. Both bills considered by the House and Senate in 1982 extended rather than eliminated deadlines for meeting health-based standards. Put in this context, the debate of last June carries lessons that are more important than the old saying that "politics makes strange bedfellows." An analysis of the dispute shows that "action forcing" regulatory statutes seldom work as planned, and also shows why many Congressmen refuse to acknowledge this failure.

A decade of delay

The Clean Air Act requires the EPA to establish "primary" air quality standards that, "allowing an adequate margin of safety, are requisite to public health." The states are delegated the principal responsibility for writing and enforcing "implementation plans" to achieve these air quality goals.

In 1970, agency officials advised Senator Edmund Muskie (D-Maine), the chief sponsor of the act, that most areas of the country could probably meet health-based air quality standards by 1980. Muskie, trying to show that he cared more about the environment than did his chief political rival, Richard Nixon, cut in half the time allotted for reaching the goal. This political one-upmanship was later dubbed "technology forcing." But it did not "force" the development of pollution control technology nearly enough. By 1975, almost every metropolitan area in the country was still violating one or more standards. As this first deadline passed, Senator Muskie, who had previously berated the EPA for allowing polluters' compliance schedules to extend past the statutory deadline, suddenly urged administrators to find "flexibility" in the act. Just as Waxman did not want to open the act to amendment in 1983, Muskie and his allies did not want to expose the act to a full-scale congressional debate while the country was in the 1975 recession and while the "energy crisis" was the leading topic of political discussion. The EPA temporized until Congress passed the 1977 amendments.

The 1977 amendments extended the deadlines to 1982 for most areas, and to 1987 for areas with especially serious "mobile source" pollution

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problems. The amendments also contained provisions to ensure that the deadlines would not slip a second time. The EPA received authority to impose large fines on recalcitrant polluters. At the same time, the amendments prohibited the EPA from using enforcement discretion to create *de facto* extensions. Only depriving administrators of such flexibility, the authors of this legislation indicated, would convince industry and the states that this time the federal government meant business. The most powerful expression of Congress's no-nonsense approach was the automatic ban on construction of new facilities in states failing to implement plans that "provide for attainment of national primary ambient air quality standards not later than December 31, 1982."

Sponsors of the 1977 amendments expected to make "mid-course corrections" as 1982 approached. However, as early as 1979 the EPA was already "conditionally" approving state plans that failed to meet all the requirements of the 1977 amendments. These conditional approvals were designed both to lift the construction ban and to relieve the EPA of its responsibility to promulgate fully adequate plans. (The EPA's single prior attempt to write an implementation plan by itself had proven disastrous.) It was no secret that many of the plans approved by the EPA could not possibly produce attainment of the standards by 1982. Early in 1981, the National Commission on Air Quality (established by the amendments to examine progress under the statute) reported that the EPA had:

> approved virtually all states' projections that they would meet the air quality standards even though federal, state, and local officials privately acknowledged that such projections often were based on imprecise emission inventories and inadequate projection techniques, and that they were overly optimistic. . . . Where states obviously were unable to support a projection of meeting the standards, EPA conditionally approved plan revisions based on the states' commitment to study further measures for control.

In other words, failure to meet the 1982 deadlines was not, as those environmentalists supporting the 1983 appropriation rider disingenuously implied, a last minute surprise, but rather a long-awaited inevitability. The only surprise was that, since 1977, the EPA's strategy had garnered the support of environmentalists both inside the Carter administration and out. EPA Assistant Administrator David Hawkins, formerly an attorney for the Natural Resources Defense Council and subsequently chief lobbyist for the National Clean Air Coalition, had convinced the environmentalists that the massive imposition of sanctions would have "disastrous effects," and he hoped the sanctions would become a "historical footnote." Thus, environmental groups played along with the game and agreed not to challenge the EPA's strategy

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in court—that is, until they decided that the Reagan administration was being *too* lenient. A chief characteristic of "action forcing" statutes is that they allow private litigants and the courts to decide which actions to "force."

Nevertheless, the EPA did make significant progress in reducing air pollution under the 1977 amendments, and the use of sanctions was a key element of this effort. By imposing civil penalties on some polluters, the federal government spurred many of the country's largest and most recalcitrant polluters to reduce their emissions. Moreover, the EPA announced that it would cut off certain federal funds and ban new construction in states that failed to adopt the automobile "inspection and maintenance" programs required by the 1977 amendments. It showed it was serious about inspection and maintenance by applying these sanctions in two states (California and Kentucky) that failed to meet the EPA halfway.

It is quite clear that the EPA's threats do become credible and produce results when the agency demands that states and polluters take selective actions (installing scrubbers or instituting auto inspection and maintenance programs) that Congress has clearly endorsed and thus will most likely stand behind. Conversely, neither threats nor cajoling work when regulators make open-ended demands that states do absolutely everything and anything necessary to attain national standards, or insist on the use of expensive or disruptive controls not clearly supported by Congress. The reality of pollution control is that regulators and polluters bargain over what controls are "reasonably available," with each side keeping in mind the extent of its political support. If application of these "reasonably available" controls fails to result in attainment of national standards by statutory deadlines, then Congress either provides new deadlines (as it did for the steel industry in special legislation passed in 1982) or it lets the deadlines quietly slip by.

Recognizing that further deadline extensions would fool no one and would succeed only in diverting administrative resources to an elaborate shell game, the National Commission on Air Quality recommended that Congress eliminate statutory deadlines and instead require periodic updating of the "reasonably available control technology" requirement for polluters in nonattainment areas. Yet chances for congressional adoption of this sensible recommendation are remarkably slim. The recommendation drew a strong dissent from the most ardent environmentalists on the Commission, who claimed that "abolition of deadlines would legitimize the perpetual failure to provide healthful air quality for 50 to 100 million people" and would remove "the 'action-forcing' quality needed to assure attainment." Each of the bills con-

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sidered by committees in the last session of Congress dealt with the problem by extending the deadlines to 1985 and 1993. Evidently, the political appeal of deadlines has outlived its environmental usefulness.

Shifting justifications

If deadlines for "forcing" the attainment of air quality standards have had nine lives, it is largely because their advocates have been quicker than cats in jumping from one justification to another. As each rationale has collapsed under the weight of experience, another has risen to take its place. The deadline has become a hollow symbol in search of a tenable underpinning.

The sponsors of the 1970 act originally claimed that deadlines were justified by the urgency of protecting public health. "The health of people," the 1970 Senate report declared, "is more important than the question of whether early achievement of ambient air quality standards protective of health is technically feasible." The first blow to this argument was the recognition that primary standards do not constitute "thresholds," that is, points at which adverse health effects begin and end. The health effects of pollution generally increase in severity with dose, without sharp discontinuities. This means both that no standard other than zero will fully protect the health of the most sensitive individuals, and that the health threat posed by pollution levels just above any given standard is only slightly more serious than the threat posed by pollution levels just below that standard. The second blow came when regulators, Congressmen, and polluters realized that the standards established in 1971 (all but one of which are still in force today) were based on amazingly tenuous evidence and relatively mild adverse effects. The third blow was recognition that attaining these arbitrary and restrictive standards would cost billions of dollars and disrupt the lives of millions of citizens.

This does not mean, however, that the rapid attainment of primary standards is always unimportant or unreasonable. Despite the huge increase in the cost of low-sulfur fossil fuels during the 1970s, only a handful of areas failed to meet primary standards for sulfur dioxide. Additionally, there is substantial evidence that these standards do protect the public from the serious health risks created by sulfur dioxide derivatives or from the damage caused by acid rain. The difficulty is that the costs and benefits of meeting the deadlines vary tremendously, not just from pollutant to pollutant, but from area to area.

Consider the case of ozone, commonly known as smog. In revising its ozone standard in 1979, EPA relied predominantly on a study show-

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ing that when six healthy adults exercised heavily (the equivalent of running six miles in an hour) while exposed to ozone levels of 0.15 parts per million (ppm), several of them experienced such discomfort as headaches and chest tightness. Adding a 20 percent "margin of safety," EPA set the standard at 0.12 ppm. It is not unusual for Los Angeles to experience ozone concentrations of almost four times this level, and attaining the standard there would require massive industrial closures and restrictions on auto use. Few doubt that such controls would cause misery far exceeding that caused by air pollution. Clearly, urgency cannot be divorced from consideration of the widely varying cost, feasibility, and benefit of attaining primary standards.

As the urgency argument lost force, deadline advocates switched their focus. In the words of Henry Waxman (who, representing Los Angeles, admits that shutting down the city is not an environmental necessity), "The purpose of deadlines is simple: to force the development of better technologies to control air pollution." By stimulating innovation, so the argument goes, deadlines make the previously infeasible become feasible and thus reduce the cost of pollution control. One problem, of course, is that deadlines can stimulate technological innovation only if they are believable. Time after time Congress has backed down, not just on deadlines for attaining air quality standards, but on deadlines for meeting new car emission standards as well. Congress has cried wolf too often. The future of "technology forcing" lies not in further use of phony deadlines, but in those pollution control strategies that make emission rights scarce and valuable.

Congress as policy maker

The final rationale for deadlines is more sophisticated and more overtly political, but ultimately unconvincing. This argument concedes that deadlines must be adjusted and that such adjustments undercut technology forcing, but it stresses that political choices about the pace of pollution control should be made by Congress rather than by faceless bureaucrats negotiating with polluters in back rooms. Today both liberals and conservatives proclaim that Congress should set policy directly rather than delegate such responsibility to agencies, and that it should write detailed legislation rather than try to exert *post hoc* control through such means as the legislative veto. What these advocates of legislative specificity generally ignore (as has been sadly evident in the debate over the legislative veto) is the institutional capacity of Congress.

To use air quality deadlines to exercise real control over the pace of pollution reduction, Congress must first set deadlines that are realistic,

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striking a rough balance between expected environmental benefits and the cost Congressmen are willing to impose on their constituents. Since the extent of pollution, and thus the cost of cleanup, varies from area to area, Congress must take the second step of setting different deadlines for different parts of the country. And since it is hard to know in advance the cost or even the benefits of control, it will always be necessary to take the third step of revising deadlines on a regular basis. The need for regional variation leads one to wonder why such important political choices should be made by Congress rather than by state and local elected officials. But leaving this highly charged issue to one side, one cannot but be impressed with the extent of responsibility this scheme places on Congress. The "action forcing" deadline strategy sets deadlines not just for polluters and administrators, but for Congress as well.

It is hardly surprising that Congress has never—neither in 1975 nor in 1982—lived up to its responsibility to revise outmoded deadlines. Part of the problem has been that committee leaders want to have their cake and eat it too, to guide policy-making through statutory revision but to act only when the political time is right. There is, though, a more basic institutional cause of Congress's failure to act in a timely fashion. The many steps in the legislative process afford any of a number of actors an opportunity to block or delay action. While in 1975 it was Senator Muskie who dragged his feet, in 1976 his chief senatorial opponent, Jake Garn (R-Utah) was able to kill Muskie's bill with an end-of-the-session filibuster. In 1982 Representative Dingell suspended the House committee's work on his bill after losing several close votes; in 1983 Representative Waxman was the one advocating caution.

While it is always good fun to ridicule the glacial speed with which Congress proceeds, the legislative branch's proclivity for slow, painstaking deliberation is one of its chief virtues. Its many veto points allow large numbers of interests to be heard and in some way accommodated. Liberals who decried congressional "deadlock" in the 1960s could, by 1981, easily recognize the danger of Congress being "stampeded" by a huge, hastily prepared (even hand-written) budget reconciliation bill. "Action forcing" seldom works on Congress. And when it does, it threatens to rob that body of its most cherished institutional advantages.

The American constitution makes coalition building in Congress difficult in order to guard against the danger of faction, both minority and majority. It also places the "energy" necessary for "good administration," as the *Federalist* puts it, in the executive branch. The energetic branch can respond to new circumstances in ways that the deliberative

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branch cannot. The history of air pollution control shows that the real adjustment of deadlines comes in negotiation among state and federal administrators and polluters. While Congressmen regularly berate administrators for failing to meet statutory deadlines, Congress has always either changed the deadlines to reflect administrative policy or quietly indicated that administrators should ignore the law.

Setting unattainable deadlines has several advantages for Congressmen. They can take credit for establishing ambitious environmental goals, criticize administrators for failing to meet them (a move which is especially attractive when the president belongs to the other party), and even condemn the poor bureaucrats for threatening to impose "unreasonable" sanctions. These advantages for individual Congressmen, though, do not make the choice made by Congress as a whole any less illusory. In this case institutional capacity is destiny.

The symbols of environmentalism

The most curious aspect of the politics of deadlines is not that most Congressmen vote for them, or even that business and the states make little effort to eliminate them (having learned not to pay any attention), but that leading environmental advocates, both in public interest groups and in Congress, cling to them so tenaciously. It is possible that environmentalists still believe that deadlines will in some way help the EPA to reduce the emissions of a few polluters. Perhaps federal regulators can convince some states and businesses that the deadlines have teeth: GM may have learned the game by now, but perhaps the local paper mill has not; if California cannot be pushed around, maybe New Hampshire can. Of course, the small—and decreasing—payoff from this game must be balanced not only against its unfairness, but also against the required expenditure of administrative time and credibility. Not surprisingly, many air pollution control officials argue that retaining deadlines can actually impede environmental protection.

Not to be overlooked is the fact that litigation plays a major role in the strategy of environmental groups and that unmet deadlines make for easy courtroom victories. For example, when the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) decided that the Reagan administration's EPA had let Illinois get away with too much, it filed suit to compel the EPA to enforce on a selective basis provisions of the law that the NRDC itself conceded should not be applied across the board. Such suits give private litigants, such as the NRDC, an enviable opportunity to amend policy set by public administrators. Environmental groups, though, are politically savvy, and recognize that they must watch out

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for political backlash. This limits the potential of litigation for achieving real environmental benefits, and helps explain why these groups have filed so few suits either directly against polluters or against states for failing to meet the deadlines.

Speculation about the incremental advantages of deadlines for environmental groups should not distract us from the obvious: The value of deadlines is primarily symbolic. But what do they symbolize? Most immediately, environmentalists fear that dropping deadlines will indicate that their movement is in retreat. But they could easily employ the strategy George Aiken suggested for the U.S. in Vietnam—they could announce victory and get out. While the value of deadlines, they could argue, was great during the 1970s, the value has slowly been eroded. Let us now cash them in for a more effective strategy, such as regular upgrading of control-technology requirements.

The leaders of the environmental movement refuse to make this trade, because for them the symbolism of deadlines goes deeper than concern over their political reputation. Deadlines—or, perhaps more accurately, the ghost of deadlines passed—constitute a reminder of how much remains to be done. In a very real sense deadlines are made to be broken. Each time we fail to meet a deadline we are reminded that more effort is needed, that our environment is not yet clean. Deadlines are a time for soul searching and rededication. Although deadlines do not directly advance the process of cleaning up the environment, abolishing them, as the National Commission's dissenters said, "would legitimize the perpetual failure to provide healthful air quality." While we can tolerate this failure for years—perhaps forever—we should never deem it "legitimate."

Thus deadlines are, to put it bluntly, a symbol of government failure. Another deadline missed, another right violated, another promise unfulfilled. Perpetual failure to meet deadlines gives those advocating more pollution control a key rhetorical advantage. Why is the government still refusing to do what is right? How can it condone this miserable situation? How long must we tolerate dirty air?

One can answer those questions with another (albeit less rhetorically powerful) question: Why is it "illegitimate" for Los Angeles to continue its present level of activity and to accept a peak ozone concentration of (to be optimistic) 0.20 ppm, not just for ten years but forever? The health risk associated with this level of pollution is quite small compared either with the other risks of urban life or with the benefits of prosperity. What many people like about that city—its climate, its size, its sprawling freeway system—is precisely what makes its smog so bad. Los Angeles is quite literally a sight fit for sore eyes, and is proud of it.

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I suspect that most sophisticated environmentalists do not see anything "illegitimate" about government's failure to keep ozone levels below 0.12 ppm in Los Angeles. Many have listened to economists long enough to realize that a riskless society is either impossible or incredibly boring. But they are not willing to give up their rhetorical advantage on rights, health standards, and deadlines because they believe the political deck is stacked against them. Without a noble lie (such as the Commission dissenters' claim that "the Clean Air Act recognizes a basic right of the American people to air that is fit to breathe") industry would use its political clout in the legislative and administrative processes to allow more pollution than "the people" would "really" choose. Conveniently, the fact that deadlines are always ignored or extended produces more evidence of the tremendous power of polluters. Belief in the dominance of industry becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The success no one admits

What is often overlooked is that, by many standards, the federal government's effort to reduce air pollution has been a remarkable success. While GNP has grown and the price of clean fuels has skyrocketed, air quality has improved in almost all major cities. Between 1974 and 1978 the number of "unhealthy days" (as determined by the Council on Environmental Quality) dropped 18 percent, "very unhealthy days" by 35 percent, and "hazardous days" by 55 percent. Think what would be said if similar gains were discovered in welfare or crime statistics. To be sure, serious problems such as acid rain remain. And regulation has produced serious inefficiencies and inequities, especially by protecting existing sources and discouraging the construction of new ones. Moreover, these gains have frequently come not because the Clean Air Act is "fundamentally sound" (as environmentalists claim) but despite the fact that it is fundamentally flawed (as most air pollution control professionals readily admit). But when one discards the arbitrary standards proclaimed in the act, it is hard to conclude that government has indeed failed again.

Capitalism has proved remarkably effective in making much of this country prosperous. Like all industrial systems it has produced externalities that harm the public health and threaten some of our most cherished wilderness areas. Government regulation has ameliorated some of these problems. But it, too, has produced an externality that has gone untreated because—like pollution before regulation—it is not considered anyone's business or anyone's problem. This externality is

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cynicism about government. Liberals and conservatives, environmentalists and polluters, all tell us government has failed. Congressmen, as political scientist Richard Fenno tells us, run *for* Congress by running *against* Congress, and every president elected after 1964 has tried to show that he has less faith in the government he hopes to lead than does his opponent.

Reading last June's debate over air quality deadlines leaves one with a cynical smile. Cynicism in private can be comic. But the spread of public cynicism can be tragic. Just as surely as pollution is harmful to public health, our Byzantine strategies for protecting the environment have become hazardous to the public spirit. In some policy areas, perhaps, our symbols are laudable but our practices are disappointing. In pollution control, however, our symbols are more in need of reform than our practices.

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The (continued) vitality of mythical numbers

PETER REUTER

THIRTEEN years ago in these pages Max Singer dealt with the following puzzle. Heroin addicts were believed to commit numerous crimes, particularly burglary and shoplifting, to support habits that then cost $30 per day and made addicts unable to function in regular jobs. There were estimated to be 200,000 addicts in New York City. Even with adjustments for addict time in prison and estimates of their non-criminal incomes, these figures jointly implied that addicts stole almost ten times as much as was estimated actually to have been stolen in New York. Singer argued that the number of addicts in New York must be overestimated; it was more likely to be 70,000 than 200,000.[1]

Much has changed since Singer's article appeared. The continued importance of the heroin crime problem over the last decade has led to some major studies of the criminal activities of heroin addicts. Addicts in those studies appear to commit extraordinary numbers of crimes when not in prison. We have learned a modest amount about the paths to addiction and the possibility, not considered in 1971, that many heroin users are not addicts. The number of heroin addicts is no longer

[1] Max Singer, "The Vitality of Mythical Numbers," *The Public Interest*, 23 (Spring, 1971).

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estimated simply by adding up the numbers on registers maintained by various local police departments and applying an essentially arbitrary "fudge factor." It is now the product of a complex statistical formula established by social scientists.

Yet we are still left with the same puzzle. The number of addicts nationally is estimated to be about 500,000 (which supposedly does not include non-addicted users). If we use the estimates, generated in various academic studies, of the number of crimes committed by addicts, we find once again that the addict population alone seems to commit more of certain kinds of property crime than actually occurs.

I believe that the problem still lies with the estimates of the number of addicts. Behind the complex estimating formula is some very questionable, but unquestioned, data collection. There is a strong interest in keeping the number high and none in keeping it correct. In that respect the estimated number of addicts is one of a class of "mythical numbers" that is becoming the routine product of government agencies. These numbers are generated by the demand that the government appear to know a great deal more than it actually does. They are often, as in the case of the number of addicts, protected from criticism partly by the one-sided interest in keeping them high and partly by their near irrelevance, at least so far, to policy-making.

How accurate are the formulas?

Edward Jay Epstein has reviewed the political history of the rapid growth in the estimated number of heroin addicts in the period 1969 to 1973, and he has shown that the growth was less from changes in the data than from changes in the estimating technique used.[2]

Although substantial, the growth was greatly overestimated. Then in 1978 the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) published a paper which claimed to estimate the number by using a multiple regression (a fairly standard tool in social science). Unfortunately, the authors of the report lacked the data to carry out a valid multiple regression. Instead they made up a number, using an argument which would fail to convince the most elementary student of statistical technique.[3] Even with that artificial number they actually lacked sufficient data to carry out a true regression; instead they used simple arithmetic. But at least

[2] Edward Jay Epstein, *Agency of Fear* (New York: Putnam, 1977).

[3] J. Greenwood and R. Crider, *Estimated Number of Heroin Addicts, 1977* (Rockville, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1978). The missing observation was the estimated number of addicts (the dependent variable) for 1976. The authors noted that the independent variables for 1976 had values close to those for 1977. The interpolated estimate for the number of addicts for 1976 then was assumed to be identical to that for 1977.

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with the help of the created number it was logically possible to come up with a formula.

A more sophisticated technique has been developed since then. This new technique at least has the virtue (for the government) of being sufficiently complex that it takes some effort to discover its unsoundness. It uses five variables for each of 24 major metropolitan areas to produce an addict estimate for each area; these are then used jointly to generate an estimate for the nation as a whole. The five variables that enter the formula are: number of heroin overdoses, number of emergency room admissions for heroin, number of persons in treatment for heroin addiction, and the price and purity of heroin in retail transactions.[4] The price of heroin is assumed to be negatively related to the number of addicts; all the other variables are assumed to be positively related.

These five variables are related to the size of the heroin population in very complex ways. For example, the number of overdoses is not just a function of the size of the population. It may also depend on the number of new and inexperienced users in the population, and on the variability in the quality of available heroin. If the purity of heroin suddenly rises, as it did after the fall of the Shah in 1978, it is quite possible that more addicts die simply because they fail to adjust their dosage levels to the increased purity of their purchases. New users are more prone to dosage errors. There is also some evidence that one-time addicts are particularly vulnerable at the time they begin again, perhaps because they overestimate their tolerance for the drug. The method used for estimating addict numbers, being entirely atheoretical in its origin, ignores that complexity and assumes a constant relationship between the number of overdoses and the size of the addict population.

The interpretation of the price of heroin in the indicator is also very questionable. Price in the heroin market is determined by demand and supply, just as in any other market. An increase in price can come from a rise in demand, as would occur if the population of addicts rose for some extraneous reason, or from a rise in the supply curve, as might occur if more police resources are shifted to making heroin dealer cases. In the short run a rise in the population of addicts—other factors staying constant—raises prices. In the long run the causal relationship is the opposite. A rise in price will diminish the flow of novice users into the pool of addicts. The index is used to measure short-run fluctuations in the number of addicts. However, the researchers assume that higher prices mean fewer addicts, which is only true in the long run.

[4] The approach was first described in P.H. Person, L. Retka, and J.A. Woodward, *Toward A Heroin Problem Index* (Rockville, MD: National Institute on Drug Abuse, 1976). It has been applied in a number of papers by researchers at Texas Christian University.

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How accurate are the data?

But let us for the moment put aside the soundness of the underlying formulation and enquire as to the quality of the data used. The price series is generated by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), which attempts to persuade local police departments to carry out undercover buys at the retail level, a level at which DEA sensibly declines to operate. Unfortunately, as the General Accounting Office showed in 1980, DEA has failed to provide adequate incentives for the police to cooperate.[5] Whereas in the third quarter of 1977, 16 cities submitted 354 samples of purchased drugs for price/purity analysis, two years later only seven cities were cooperating and submitted only 93 samples. The number has probably declined still further since then.

Thus it is not surprising to find that in some cities the researchers report having fewer than three price observations from which to make an estimate of price. In these cases they fleshed out their data by taking a price observation from some neighboring city. Unfortunately, we have every reason to doubt that different cities in the same region have similar patterns of change in heroin prices. To borrow a price from some other city is to make a farce of a formula that aims to compare changes across cities.

Further doubt about the price series is raised by examining how the observed price changes over time in different cities. The Table displays the price series for four cities. The dramatic changes in the semi-annual observations of price are not consistent with a large and smoothly operating market, which is certainly a fair description of the heroin market in big cities such as San Francisco.

Changes of 35 percent are not uncommon from one period to the next. Successive six month periods will see a large increase followed by an even more dramatic decrease. These changes are not consistent across cities, as one might expect if they were determined, for example, by changes in the world opium market. A large increase in San Francisco occurred in the second half of 1980, at the same time as a large decrease in San Diego and an unchanged price in Washington, D.C.

It is also interesting to note the large and inconsistent discrepancies recorded by two agencies in Seattle. One price series comes from DEA, the other from the Seattle Police Department. In some periods the DEA price figure is substantially higher than that of the Police Department; at other times the DEA price is considerably lower.

These simply are not data from which serious estimates can be made.

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[5] *Heroin Statistics Can Be Made More Reliable*, Report GGD 80-84. (Washington, D.C.: General Accounting Office, 1980).

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Price of Heroin 1977-1981 (dollars per pure milligram)[1]

	Washington D.C.	San Francisco	San Diego	Seattle (DEA)	Seattle (police)
Half-year					
77:1	6.86	1.05	1.35	4.28	12.30
77:2	4.03	1.25+	1.54	8.06	15.43
78:1	5.40	1.34	1.39	18.84	9.76
78:2	3.10	1.42[2]	1.04	8.83	13.52
79:1	2.44	1.04	2.69	6.76	5.39
79:2	2.89	—	1.67	8.82	29.02
80:1	2.83	2.02[2]	3.00	10.00–13.00	—
80:2	2.83	4.61	1.83	10.00–13.00	3.13
81:1	1.67	—	0.76	3.57–5.72	—
81:2	2.16	—	0.82	—	—

[1] Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse.
[2] The San Francisco report lists those periods with fewer than three observations.

They are numbers generated by a process that no one has taken the time to describe and understand. A few additional price observations in one of the "anchor" cities, those that serve to provide the scaling for all others, can substantially alter the whole national estimate.

Crime by addicts

This analysis only suggests that there might be a very large and random error associated with estimating the number of addicts. It does not by any means say that the series does not fluctuate around the correct number. Are there any indicators that might enable us to determine whether figures such as 500,000 are reasonable? One approach is that used by Singer, namely to look at the number of property crimes that these addicts might have committed to support their heroin needs and compare this with the total number of property crimes estimated to have occurred.

Many recent studies claim to have produced, through self-reports, estimates of the criminal activity by heroin addicts. Some of the figures are astonishing. A Rand study of incarcerated poly-drug heroin users (users who took some other drug as well, probably when heroin prices rose) found that on the average, each year they were addicted and not incarcerated, they committed robberies on 33.6 days, burglaries on 67.6 days, and other theft on 65.8 days.[6] But the Rand study, though using probably the highest quality data, is not one we can use for our

[6] Jan and Marcia Chaiken, *Varieties of Criminal Behavior* (Santa Monica, CA: The Rand Corporation, 1982).

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calculations, since it deals with *incarcerated* addicts. There are various studies which provide data on the number of crimes reported by a sample of non-incarcerated addicts.

The most widely cited of these is one which was carried out in Baltimore during the early 1970s.[7] This study gathered data on a sample of 243 male addicts who had been identified by the Baltimore Police Department between 1952 and 1971. It found that in those years during which the addict was not incarcerated, he committed criminal offenses on an average of nearly half the days (178). That in turn was the average of the number of annual crime days when addicted (248) and when "abstinent" (41). Addicts in the sample spent about one third of their time in prison or jail.

The reports from this study do not give the rates of particular crimes that were committed by the addicts. Drug sales were included, and for nearly 20 percent of the addicts this was the major criminal activity. Other important crime types included gambling, forgery, and procuring.

The authors carried out an interestingly pointless exercise: They calculated the number of crimes for which addicts are responsible annually, assuming that their sample is representative of the nation's addict population. Their calculation is conservative, they say, because they assume that the addict commits only one crime each day he commits any crime. They then find that the male addict population of the nation (76.7 percent of the 480,000 estimated addicts) commits 42 million crimes or crime-days per annum. Female addicts, not included in this study, are believed to have a crime rate of only 50 percent of that of male addicts, and to spend only half as much time in prison. That adds another 7 million crime-days, giving a convenient total of almost 50 million crime-days for the nation.

The problem with this calculation is that we have nothing with which to compare it. Including drug sales in the base makes the calculation almost pointless. If there are 20 million marijuana users, for example, as survey evidence suggests, then there are certainly 50 million annual marijuana sales, which would count as crimes in this study. The number of prostitution offenses—and this is an important offense category for female addicts—is certainly also in the tens of millions.

The interesting exercise is to estimate the number of property and violent crimes for which addicts would account if the sample were truly representative. A rough way to make this estimate is to eliminate all

[7] John C. Ball, et al., "Lifetime Criminality of Heroin Addicts in the United States," *Journal of Drug Issues* (Summer 1982). This study was cited by Attorney General William French Smith in launching the 1982 campaign for the federal regional drug task forces.

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the members of the sample who are classified otherwise than as thieves. We impute to the entire sample, in other words, only the thieving activity of the 60 percent who are predominantly thieves. The term "theft" appears to be broadly used in the study and includes robbery, burglary, and larceny in its many forms. This gives us about 115 days of theft per year addicted, compared to the 178 days of criminal activity used in their aggregate calculation—that is, almost two-thirds of the total is some form of theft. That would yield a total of almost 33 million robberies, larcenies, and burglaries for the nation each year.

Absurd estimates

This figure is patently absurd. The total number of property crimes is scarcely as high as that. Moreover, much evidence suggests that many crimes are committed by youths who are not yet regular heroin users; few heroin addicts are regular users before they are 20 years old, yet a very high proportion of property crime is committed by males between the ages of 15 and 18.

The implausibility of the estimated addict population becomes even clearer if we focus on the number of robberies, a relatively well-defined and well-reported crime. Self-reports by a sample of households and businesses show that there were about 1.4 million robberies in 1978. Some of these involve more than one criminal. Using the available data a reasonable estimate seems to be that about 3.4 million person-robbery incidents occurred. (That is, if every robber listed all the robberies he committed, the reported total would be 3.4 million.)

The Baltimore study did not provide robbery-specific information. Another study, carried out in Miami in 1978, provides more detail.[8] The 239 active male addicts in that study committed an average of 14 robberies, as well as 17 burglaries and 40 shoplifting incidents in a twelve month period. If there were 240,000 such addicts they would account for all the estimated robberies carried out in the nation. The Miami study appears to show a somewhat lower rate of property crime than the Baltimore study, so it is likely that detailed analysis of the robbery figure in the Baltimore study would show an even smaller number of addicts accounting for all the robberies committed in the nation. Adjusting for those in prison and in treatment, the total addict population would be less than 350,000.

Moreover, we do have some evidence that addicts do not account for the bulk of property crimes. The Rand study, though it found that poly-drug heroin addicts had much higher rates of property crime than

[8] James Inciardi, "Heroin Use and Street Crime," *Crime and Delinquency* 25 (1979).

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did non-addicts, also provided data suggesting that non-addicts account for a significant proportion of robberies. Further, the prison population has almost none of the adolescents who survey data show make up an important group in the robbery population. These adolescents are not addicts either. So it is plausible that the number of addicts is much less than 350,000.

The robbery figures suggest two possibilities, one or both of which may be true. The first is that the addict estimate is far too high. The second is that not all addicts are like the addicts in the Baltimore and Miami sample; there may be a large fraction of the addict population, perhaps even a majority, which does not engage in criminal activity to support its heroin consumption *and* which is not identified by researchers who attempt to locate groups of heroin addicts. In the Baltimore study the researchers used a Baltimore Police Department cumulative listing of addicts known to it. If there is such a phenomenon as controlled regular heroin use in non-poor, non-criminal populations—and there is a modest amount of anecdotal information to suggest it exists—the police would be unlikely to know of such users.

At this stage the only respectable stance is pure agnosticism.[9] We know how many people come in for treatment of heroin addiction and the number is sometimes quite large: in 1979, 95,000 for the nation and about 23,000 for New York City. We should ensure that facilities are always available for those seeking treatment. But we do not know, and are very far from knowing, the relationship between this number and the total number of addicts from which the treatment population comes.

How large is the illegal drug market?

A new set of numbers has further enhanced the devil image of drugs. These are the estimates of total income from illegal drug sales. For the years 1978 to 1980 an entity with a curious name, the National Narcotics Intelligence Consumers Committee (NNICC), consisting of representatives of eleven federal agencies, published estimates of total income from the sale of heroin, cocaine, marijuana, and "dangerous drugs." The estimates rose from about $50 billion in 1978 to about $80 billion in 1980.

These figures have been enthusiastically received. They have been

[9] It is perhaps proper here to enter an exculpatory note for the researchers who generated the indicator methodology. They were well aware of the frailty of the estimates that the indicator generated. As GAO reported: "One of the authors stated that the estimates were actually a best guess. He concluded that it was possibly a mistake to publish the estimates and warned against using them in comparison with other estimates for a different time period."

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quoted by Democrats and Republicans alike. Then-Attorney General Smith used them in October 1982 to bolster his argument for an increased federal drug enforcement effort. They are routinely cited in the stories on drugs that magazines and newspapers publish on dreary "no news" days. They have even entered into the margins of academic literature, though it is fair to say that respectable academics, who might well be able to use the estimate of drug income in discussing crime in America, have had the good sense to ignore them.

But no one has criticized them. The Internal Revenue Service, a member of NNICC, has raised some doubts, expressed with admirable honesty in a dissent printed in the 1980 NNICC report. Otherwise the numbers stand unchallenged.

In fact, they are without plausible foundation. The data on which they are based do not support them, and are themselves of dubious origin. Again, that is not to say that the estimates are wrong, but the government's claim to have even a rough estimate of the level of expenditures on illicit drugs is simply unreasonable.

Consider the number for annual marijuana expenditures, which NNICC estimated at $18.3 billion to $26.8 billion in 1980 (the estimated quantity consumed was 10,200 to 15,000 metric tons). Given that the possession of small quantities of the drug is not subject to criminal sanction for about one-third of the population, and that there is truly a mass market for marijuana, household survey data may provide a reasonable base for estimating the amount of marijuana consumed. Together with price data, surely obtainable since the police arrest about 400,000 persons annually for marijuana possession or sale, one might then have a rough estimate of the total expenditures for marijuana.

It is extremely difficult to reconstruct the method used by NNICC to produce its estimate. The detail provided in the published documents is inadequate. I have relied on a draft of a forthcoming publication sponsored by one of the agencies represented on NNICC. The NNICC estimate is based on a national household survey carried out about every second year. That survey provides little detail about marijuana use beyond very broad categorizations of frequency of use. However, an annual survey of high school seniors, conducted by the University of Michigan, provides much more detailed information about marijuana use by respondents. With only mildly heroic assumptions, it is possible to use the high school senior data together with household survey data to produce an estimate of total marijuana consumption. The result of doing that produces an estimate of total consumption of about 4,200 metric tons for 1982, barely 40 percent of the bottom of the official estimate range. The revenue yielded by this quantity is estimated at

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about $4.9 billion, about 25 percent of the lower end of the official estimate.

The differences between the survey estimate and the official figures arise mainly from assumptions about the amount of marijuana in a cigarette and the price paid by regular heavy users. The government assumes that the amount of marijuana in a cigarette has remained constant over a long period, during which the average potency of marijuana has risen very rapidly. The best available data (which are not very good) show that the weight of marijuana in each joint has in fact declined by about 20 percent in the period 1976 to 1982. The government also assumes that heavy users pay the full retail price, though it is likely that heavy users, by buying in quantity (four or more ounces at a time), are able to buy at a substantially lower price.

The $4.9 billion estimate from the survey data should not be taken too seriously. Analyses of self-report data on consumption of substances about whose use people are sensitive, such as alcohol and tobacco, indicate that non-response, underreporting, and the like lead to substantial underestimates of total consumption from survey data. The figure may be closer to $7 billion or $8 billion; it is surely not as high as $20 billion.

The estimate for cocaine, the largest item in the 1980 NNICC revenue estimates, at $29 billion, assumes that cocaine is sold at 30 percent purity. In fact, as the IRS pointed out in its dissent, that is the wholesale purity; at retail, purity is closer to 12 percent. Given the method used by NNICC for making its estimates, this error alone raises the estimate 150 percent above its plausible value. A number of other assumptions identified by the IRS in its dissent from the 1980 estimate show that the NNICC figure is again almost four times its plausible value.

The heroin figure starts with the assumption of 500,000 addicts, which I have already suggested is almost certainly much too high. The estimated consumption levels for individual addicts, divided into three classes, seem too high. According to the NNICC numbers there are almost 150,000 addicts who, during the two-thirds of the time they are on the street, spend $100 per day on heroin. The theft requirement to support that habit is highly implausible.

The demand for mythical numbers

Singer noted in his original article that mythical numbers seemed to be characteristic of the study of crime, mentioning the wholly artificial figure for illegal gambling revenues cited by the Kefauver Committee in 1951. As in the case of heroin addict estimates, there have been

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refinements of the official estimates for gambling income. Though more elaborate, these figures are, alas, quite as unsound as the transparent guesses they replace. My own favorite mythical number is the figure for the number of compulsive gamblers, a number that circulated in several official documents during the late 1960s and early 1970s. The figure, ten million, seems to have been based on a late-night phone call to a Gamblers Anonymous hotline, made by a desperate government official who needed a number to fill out a table on the social costs of various behavioral disorders. The number disappeared after a while for lack of documentable provenance, but it did enjoy modest celebrity for a few years.

No doubt there have always been mythical numbers in the world, numbers that satisfy some deep-seated urge to be able to fix the size of the "enemy," internal or external. Greek citizens may really have believed that Xerxes had an army of one million when he invaded their country, even if modern scholarship has shown that this would have been far beyond his logistical capacity. But it is surely not too much to ask that the myth-making be kept an activity of the informal sector and that the government stick to providing estimates only when it has some reasonable basis and need for doing so.

Why are numbers like estimates of the heroin addict population allowed to circulate without criticism? I think at least three factors help explain this phenomenon. First, there is no constituency for keeping the numbers accurate, while there is a large constituency for keeping them high. The broad consensus that the drug traffic is evil simply exacerbates the problem, even when people disagree on the best approach for overcoming that evil. For example, some feel that the answer is legalization, at least of marijuana. Nonetheless it is in their interest to see that the numbers on current traffic stay high, since the numbers bolster their argument by suggesting the immensity of the existing problem. For the much larger groups who want more rigorous law enforcement or more treatment and prevention programs, the high income figures are additional evidence of the seriousness of the situation and the need for further efforts. It is hard to identify an organized constituency, apart from drug dealers, who might benefit from a lower estimate. The agency members of NNICC, who might at least seek to give the estimates a downward trend in order to show success, seem more satisfied to have a high number to justify their budgets. The Internal Revenue Service's recent enthusiasm for getting the numbers down, closer to the true value, may be explained, in part, by the fact that its budget is little affected by the size of the drug problem.

The second factor explaining the wide circulation of these estimates

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is the lack of any systematic scholarly interest in the whole issue. The literature on drug dealing, as opposed to drug use and the relationship between drug use and crime, is extremely slender. There are few outside the federal government who have involved themselves in the estimation problems associated with drug markets. The agencies have not been very willing to provide data. Indeed, DEA has discontinued publication of some of its major series, making research even more difficult. The Associate Attorney General's claim that the South Florida Task Force had managed to raise the price of cocaine was refuted when an innocent DEA official unwittingly released data showing that the price seemed to have dropped.[10] This price series used to be published openly; now it is obtainable only through the indiscretion of government officials.

The third factor is the most fundamental. The numbers have almost no policy consequence. It is certainly hard to identify any policy measure that rests on the estimate that the marijuana market generates $20 billion rather than $7 billion. The size of the government's expenditures on drug treatment or law enforcement is certainly not driven by such numbers. Nowhere is there evidence that calculations are made of the marginal return from investing additional government resources on drug problems, in terms of the effect of expenditures on the scale of drug market incomes.[11]

But movements in these numbers do have some significance. A rise in the official estimate of the number of addicts has often been a major tool in pressing for expanded drug treatment programs. The announcement that drug market incomes have increased by over one-third is a rallying point for those seeking additional funds for drug law enforcement. It is impressive that in December 1982, during a period of great budgetary austerity, President Reagan was able to obtain an additional appropriation of $127 million for new regional drug task forces. These task forces are almost certain to make most of their cases against marijuana and cocaine dealers, rather than heroin dealers, and the

[10] The Justice Department publishes only nominal prices. When the General Accounting Office pointed out that drug prices were rising less than consumer prices generally, the Justice Department said, "adjustments for inflation for illegal drugs outside of legal commerce are artificial." Of course the attractiveness of drugs is certainly in part a function of their price relative to alternative entertainments.

[11] One well-informed dissident government official disagrees with this view, at least with respect to the drug income numbers. The $80 billion figure received wide circulation within the Department of Justice and was treated by senior officials not just as a number for public consumption but as a true measure of how important the problem was, thus sparking the request for substantial additional drug enforcement expenditures. The official also argues that I overlook the demoralizing impact on lower level officials of having to work with numbers that they know are seriously in error.

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purported increase in the income generated by these markets in recent years certainly played a role in mobilizing Congressional support for the request.

NNICC is sufficiently concerned about the quality of its earlier drug revenue estimates that, in preparing a report on 1981, it decided to omit dollar estimates, though not quantity estimates, until a more serious analysis could be carried out. It will be interesting to see the consequences of a substantial downward revision in the numbers, which is the likely outcome of a more serious effort. My own guess is that the major agencies involved in preparation of the estimates will be embarrassed but that there will be no substantive change in law or policy. The drug problem is perceived as big; its actual size is irrelevant to the government's response to it.

This may be taken as further evidence for the proposition that the quality of official data is largely a function of its importance to those who use it. The actual size of the heroin addict population and of drug market incomes is simply not important either to the agencies that prepare the estimates or to any other organized group. Numbers without purpose are numbers without quality.

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Who Has Donned Lysenko's Mantle?

STEPHEN JAY GOULD

I HAVE rarely departed from Jonson's advice that "calumnies are answered best with silence." But Bernard D. Davis's diatribe against me ("Neo-Lysenkoism, IQ, and the Press," Fall, 1983) is so egregious on all counts—so extraordinarily unfair, even cruel, in its personal characterizations and so poorly argued in its general claims and factually false in its specific charges—that I must make some response.

Davis's article, largely an attack on my book *The Mismeasure of Man*, begins with (and rests upon) a false premise: that a troubling paradox inheres in the supposed fact that my book, while lauded in the popular press, was damned by experts in technical publications. Davis writes: "The reviews in the scientific journals were almost all highly critical"; and "It is important for the general public to understand why scientists close to the field have reacted so negatively to *The Mismeasure of Man*."

Davis's claim is not even supported by his own limited sample. He discusses eight reviews written by professional scientists, four positive and four negative, but manages to dismiss all four laudatory accounts on dubious grounds: one because it came from a *historian* of science (the major field, by the way, that *The Mismeasure* represents); one because the reviewer supposedly misunderstood my position (I think he grasped it quite well); a third because the author has a well-known *parti pris* on the subject (fair enough, perhaps, but Davis happily admits Arthur Jensen's review as an unbiased account from the other side); and the fourth because its magazine (*Scientific American*, scarcely a political rag) supposedly holds an "official" position in my favor.

But, like many authors, I am blessed with the fruits of an assiduous press-clipping service maintained by my publisher. I have all the reviews of *The Mismeasure of Man*. Some were quite negative. Indeed, Davis missed two of the least favorable (by J.N. Spuhler and L. Humphreys). Most, however, followed the public press in their praise. Of 24 reviews written by experts (19 professional psychologists and five distinguished scientists in related fields), 14 are positive, seven negative, and three mixed. (I have even given Davis the benefit of all doubt by excluding the four positive reviews that he excised and including the four negative accounts that he discussed.) I was particularly pleased that the *British Journal of Mathematical and Statistical Psychology*, Cyril Burt's old periodical and once the leading defender of his heredita-

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rian views, ended its long, positive account (May, 1983) thusly: "Gould has performed a valuable service in exposing the logical basis of one of the most important debates in the social sciences, and this book should be required reading for students and practitioners alike."

Davis caricatures my book as presenting a crude, crusading environmentalism, but several psychologists appreciated its true intent. Educational psychologist Marion Bennathan writes: "There is nothing in Gould's book to say that we are all born equal. But like many of us, he is weary of the sterile arguments about the relative share of heredity and environment." Paul Pruyser, Pfeiffer Professor at the Menninger Foundation, states: "Gould is not only astute, he is also fair . . . I, for one, am thankful for this engagingly written book. It is not merely an expository work without undue polemicism, but is a highly informative chapter in the history of science."

Several reviewers even commented on the unfair and biased character of other, negative accounts. To the false charge (also advanced by Davis) that I oppose all research in behavior genetics, Ronald Myhr, writing in the *Ontario Psychologist*, states: "I have seen Gould referred to as a proponent of such a head-in-the sand attitude to progress. This is most unfair. Gould, rather, leaves us with an optimistic synthesis of nature and nurture." And Paul Harvey, an astute young sociobiologist scarcely inclined to read me with praise (*The Mismeasure of Man* ends with a negative assessment of his field), writes: "This book came to me after I had read some reviews of it. I was surprised at the extent to which people had misunderstood it. It does not matter what we now know of brain structure—there may be differences between races and sexes; it does not matter what we now know of aptitude testing; it does not matter that we have improved methods of factor analysis. Untruths have been and are asserted in the name of science. I believe that this book will stand as an edifice for those of us concerned with the way our science is influenced by what we expect to find" (*Quarterly Review of Biology*, September, 1982). Harvey also calls my volume "the most absorbing book about scientists and their work that I have ever read."

DAVIS's second section purports to analyze *The Mismeasure of Man*, but nearly every statement reveals a basic misunderstanding or simple (and careless) mischaracterization. Just three examples: (1) Davis criticizes my analysis of Goddard's work on the mental status of immigrants, and impugns my general scholarship, by charging that I neglected Goddard's method of eliminating both "obviously" normal and feeble-minded people and analyzing only those in the middle. Davis writes: "But let us look at what Goddard actually wrote. The first sentence of his paper states that 'this is not a study of immigrants in general but of six small highly selected groups,' leaving out those at either end of the scale who were 'obviously' either normal or feeble-minded." But I stated prominently that "These groups could not be regarded as random samples because government officials had already 'culled out those they recognized as defective.' To balance this bias, Goddard and his associates 'passed by the obviously normal. That left us the great mass of "average immigrants".'" I then commented—in a

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passage that captures the essence of my book (which is about unconscious bias that can be recognized and eliminated and not, as Davis seems to think, about the inherent impossibility of objective knowledge): "I am continually amazed by the unconscious statements of prejudice that slip into supposedly objective accounts. Note here that average immigrants are below normal, or at least not obviously normal—the proposition that Goddard was supposedly testing, not asserting *a priori*."

(2) Davis cites with approval a review containing the following false characterization: "Gould claims that Army intelligence tests led to the Immigration Restriction Act of 1925" (the year was 1924, but we'll let that pass). I made no such statement. Restriction was clearly in the political air. Some act would probably have been passed in any case; the tests did strongly influence—and this is all I claimed—the peculiar character of the national quotas with their stringent limits on those nations deemed sub-par by the Army tests. I wrote: "Restriction was in the air, and may well have occurred without scientific backing. (Consider the wide spectrum of support that limitationists could muster—from traditional craft unions fearing multitudes of low-paid laborers, to jingoists and America firsters who regarded most immigrants as bomb-throwing anarchists and who helped make martyrs of Sacco and Vanzetti.) But the timing, and especially the peculiar character, of the 1924 Restriction Act clearly reflected the lobbying of scientists and eugenicists."

(3) I wrote, in a key sentence: "Spearman's *g*, and its attendant claim that intelligence is a single, measurable entity, provided the only theoretical justification that hereditarian theories of IQ ever had." Davis quotes this sentence and states: "This assertion is utterly false. Whether an IQ test measures mostly general intelligence or mostly a collection of independent abilities, the heritability of whatever it measures will be precisely the same." I know this of course, and explicitly did not invoke Spearman's *g* to justify claims of heritability. My statement attempts to characterize "hereditarian theories of IQ." Such theories must advance *two* claims: one for heritability; and the second, that IQ measures something meaningful. Spearman's *g* is the key argument for the second requirement—the meaningfulness of IQ as a measure of a single, real property called general intelligence. That's why I referred to "Spearman's *g*, and *its attendant claim that intelligence is a single, measurable entity*." Note that this says nothing about heritability. Nearly every aspect of morphology has some heritability. Yet no one studies heritability of the first joint of the middle finger, though it must be high, because this feature lacks any general significance. I clearly argued—devoting a separate chapter to each subject in order to make the distinction that Davis blurs—that the hereditarian theory of IQ requires two essential statements: the claim for inheritance and the claim for meaning—and that *g* represents the claim for meaning.

In the third section, as he moves from the merely false to the simply ugly, Davis attempts to impugn my entire reputation as a scientist. I might be tempted to reply at length to this hurtful ploy, were it not based on such a simple-minded and ludicrous misunderstanding of my

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main contribution, the theory of punctuated equilibrium. Davis apparently thinks that punctuated equilibrium is a theory about variable rates of evolution within phyletic lines, and he points out (correctly of course) that marked fluctuations have long been recognized. But punctuated equilibrium denies that evolution within phyletic lines represents an important input to evolution at all (and at any rate), and identifies events of branching speciation as determiners of evolutionary rates and patterns. (In orthodox speciation theory, standard rates, though slow measured against the course of our lives, are geologically instantaneous—5,000 to 50,000 years represents a bedding plane in most geological circumstances. Hence, the punctuations of the theory.)

Finally, in a closing fillip of unpleasantness, Davis smears me with the epithet of Neo-Lysenkoism. Again, as with punctuated equilibrium, I scarcely know whether to laugh or rage. No nastier label could ever be applied to an evolutionary biologist, but then the attribution is so silly.

Taken literally, the charge makes awfully little sense when attached to an evolutionist who has worked all his professional life with Mendelian genetics. The only article I ever wrote on the subject, a defense of Vavilov and an excoriation of Lysenko (*Natural History*, April, 1981, reprinted in my book *Hen's Teeth and Horse's Toes*) should establish my orthodoxy in this area.

If Davis means this charge in the metaphorical sense of trying to block research by state power, then he has it all backwards. I've always seen myself as a gadfly, not a *gauleiter*. If I ever become commissar of research (heaven forfend), I promise that I will not deal in proscription by governmental fiat. As a scholar, however, I surely have a right to argue that, in my opinion, certain lines of research will be unproductive because they are based on fundamental fallacies of reasoning and (often unrecognized) biases of Western thought. Scholars operate this way all the time. The venerable, eminent, and conservative evolutionist P.J. Darlington does not become a Lysenkoist when he argues (as he did in the staid *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* for April, 1983) that "much current evolutionary and sociobiological theory presented by the most influential evolutionists is mistaken and dangerous" because it misapplies the logic of natural selection. There is a world of difference between criticism and proscription.

I'm no expert, but if I had to characterize the essence of Lysenkoism, as I understand it, I would say that it represents the attempt to discredit colleagues by invective and innuendo, when facts, reason, and logic are not on your side. With this definition in mind, let the reader decide whether Davis or I merits the label of Lysenkoite.

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A Reply

BERNARD D. DAVIS

As my article stated, I do not doubt Stephen Jay Gould's sincerity in seeking a more just and generous world. Moreover, since he considers the article unfair and cruel, he deserves credit for confining his reply to the intellectual issues and for maintaining civility in our personal contacts. But I do not think I was cruel, though I certainly was severe. In trying to treat such serious issues responsibly I could not afford to mute any painful facts or inferences; and, Gould's own colorful style does not invite gentleness. Readers of his columns and books will recall how vigorously he has questioned the integrity and the competence of those whose views offend him (see, for example, his "Of Crime, Cause, and Correlation" in *Discover*, December 1983).

Gould charges that I have built on a false premise. Tabulating a complete list of reviews, he notes that the majority of those by psychologists and "distinguished scientists in related fields" is positive. But numbers alone, without evaluation of qualifications, carry little weight: One would not pay much attention to a family doctor reviewing a book on the genetics of schizophrenia. I therefore felt justified in focusing on major journals, where, as I claimed, scientists *close to the field* were negative.

Psychologists are a diverse group, and most would not be expert enough in behavioral genetics or psychometric theory to judge critically the heart of Gould's book: his novel scientific arguments about general intelligence and heritability. Specifically, he identifies three favorable reviewers professionally, and it is interesting that they are an educational psychologist, a professor at a private psychiatric institution, and a sociobiologist.

Gould further charges that my grounds for dismissing four laudatory reviews by scientists were dubious. Three of these speak for themselves, as cited in my article. In the case of the fourth, *Scientific American*, my claim of a blind spot in that excellent journal might seem ad hoc, so I will provide an example. In 1974 Kamin, finding flaws in all the evidence for the magnitude of the heritability of intelligence, concluded that the scientific method requires us to accept the null hypothesis—i.e., that the magnitude is zero. This is nonsense, for zero is a specific value, and in the absence of proof it is no more likely than any other value. Depending on how severely one views the flaws in the evidence, the scientific answer should be either that we are prepared to accept an imprecise, broad range of values, or that we do not know. *Scientific American* chose as its guest reviewer an astronomer known to be sympathetic to the extreme environmentalist view, and he supported the pseudoscientific argument for the null hypothesis.

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I realized that citing Jensen's review would turn away some readers; and it was obvious that this review, as Gould suggests, might be biased in my favor. Moreover, in my opinion Jensen has accepted estimates of the heritability of IQ that are almost certainly too high. Nevertheless, since I found his technical analysis of Gould's book highly competent and comprehensive, I would betray a scholarly obligation if I ignored such a major review in order to avoid criticism. The interested reader may wish to compare the tone of this article, in the *Contemporary Education Review*, with that of Richard Lewontin in the *New York Review of Books*, or the *Scientific American* review noted above (July 1975).

Moving on to my own analysis of the book, Gould charges me with falsely impugning his scholarship, by ignoring his recognition that Goddard's population sample, in his famous Ellis Island study, was not random. But while he did indeed discuss Goddard's sampling, he then made a huge extrapolation: "Could anyone be made to believe that four fifths of any *nation* were morons?" [emphasis added]. Compare this summary by Gould with Goddard's first sentence, which I cited: "This is not a study of immigration in general but of six small highly selected groups."

Actually, Goddard's research was so primitive that there is little point in arguing over his sampling, and over whether his effort to balance a bias in selection reflected prejudice or scientific naivete. Gould ignores something much more fundamental: a quotation from Goddard, which I cited, expressing confidence that the children of these immigrant "morons" will be "of average intelligence . . . and good citizens." This citation contrasts remarkably with Gould's heading for this story: "Preventing the immigration and propagation of morons."

I am surprised that Gould would bother with my citation from a review that discussed the 1917 Army alpha tests, since I referred to these tests only briefly, as "incredibly crude." No doubt public knowledge of the tests did play a role in the Immigration Restriction Act of 1924 (which I, also from an immigrant background, deplore as much as Gould). However, since he made the further strong claim that the Act "clearly reflected the lobbying of scientists and eugenicists," it seemed fair for me to note the reviewer's statement that no psychologist testified before Congress, and that the reports of the House Committee do not mention intelligence tests. Far more to the point, Gould does not reply to my main criticism of the historical part of his book: his implication that the horror stories of the past are a permanent paradigm for the field.

In commenting on my critiques of his arguments on general intelligence and on heritability, Gould emphasizes his separation of the claim for the meaning of IQ and the claim for its heritability. But when he speaks of "the only theoretical justification that hereditarian theories of IQ ever had," the separation becomes fuzzy. The phrase "hereditarian theories" has no clear meaning, and it is understandable that I interpreted it as a pejorative synonym for the study of heritability (the fraction of the variance in intelligence that is due to inheritance). If

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Gould did realize that his denunciation of IQ as an artificial composite had no implication for the heritability of its individual factors, it is strange that he should have avoided mentioning that fact, and avoided even defining heritability. Indeed, in his comment he uses "heritability" and "inheritance" as synonyms, thus continuing to treat the issue in terms of the outmoded artificial dichotomy of nature vs. nurture.

On this topic, Gould does not discuss my substantive objections to his reification and factoring arguments against the concept of general intelligence, and my suggestion that its measurement can still have practical value (if the limitations are recognized), even as more refined analyses, differentiating various kinds of intelligence, are being developed. I would contrast his assault on IQ with Howard Gardner's recent constructive plea in *Frames of Mind* (Basic Books, 1983), also written for a broad audience, for recognizing multiple intelligences.

I was of two minds about discussing Gould's science, and I will agree that the resulting exposition was too brief to convey a clear picture of "punctuated equilibrium." But his picture is not clear. In recent papers he has so attenuated the concept that I no longer disagree—but I also find little novelty. Meanwhile, in the press he continues his bold claims for a revolutionary reinterpretation of Darwinism, and maintains the image of David slaying the Goliath of the evolutionary establishment.

Since Gould has characterized my criticism of his science as "ugly," let me defend its objectivity by noting that his work has elicited a remarkably large number of opposing articles by leading evolutionists, criticizing in particular his way of formulating problems and his claims for originality. In one example, Ernst Mayr, writing in the *American Naturalist*, has politely but firmly torn apart the caricature of neo-Darwinian theory as "panglossian paradigm" that Gould and his coauthor Lewontin attack. And a number of letters about my article, from members of the National Academy of Sciences in Gould's field, have emphasized that such a sharp criticism of his science and its political bias was long overdue. It is clear that Gould, however effective as a teacher and a popularizer, is not a scientist's scientist.

Finally, Neo-Lysenkoism: I can understand Gould's resentment at this charge, which would indeed be unjustified if it implied any of the definitions that he discusses. But I defined the term carefully: "an effort to outlaw a field of science because it conflicts with a political dogma." And the Lysenkoist model comes even closer because Gould is dealing with a branch of genetics. While I do not doubt that he would be opposed to proscription by government fiat, and I know he has written a vigorous attack on the original Lysenkoism, I cannot ignore the fact that he is affiliated with Science for the People, and his book supports their campaign against behavioral genetics—a campaign that has, for example, halted research in this country on the effects of an extra Y chromosome.

Gould ends by asserting his right, as a scholar, to expose the biases of Western thought. But in *The Mismeasure of Man* he is not an innocent scholar exposing novel arguments to critical evaluation by other scholars. He is a public figure, using his scientific credentials to influence the attitude of a much wider, lay public toward mental testing

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and behavioral genetics. And as a public figure he is not immune to unvarnished criticism. One could reasonably charge that my attack was too blunt: That is a matter of taste and judgment. But I do not accept his characterization of my explicit exposition as invective and innuendo: Indeed, it is surely the opposite of innuendo.

To end on a more positive note: I think Stephen Jay Gould is a national treasure as an effective conveyer of science to the public. But I am sorry he handled the IQ controversy and related topics the way he did in *The Mismeasure of Man*—sacrificing scientific integrity to hyperbole for political purposes.

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CURRENT READING

Explaining the "Gender Gap" among Scientists

For the past several years, the National Science Foundation (NSF) has been keeping tabs on the unemployment rates among scientists and engineers, and every year this foundation has been reporting disturbing sets of statistics: Women in the sciences show greater unemployment rates than men. In fact, this "sex differential" in the unemployment rates (now known as the "gender gap") is far greater among scientists than it is among the general population.

But the NSF has continued to study its data to learn more about this apparent phenomenon. The new facts of the matter reported in the *American Economic Review* by Michael G. Finn (December 1983) indicate that the overall rate of unemployment for women scientists and engineers is higher because women are more likely than men to place personal restrictions on their job search activities. That is to say, women, more than men, will restrict themselves to a particular location or to part-time hours. After interviewing men and women in the sciences in 1978 and 1979, the NSF recalculated its unemployment rates by excluding those men and women who indicated that their job searches had been limited by such constraints. With new data, the NSF determined that the unemployment rates fall from 1.4 to 0.7 percent for men and from 3.7 to 0.8 percent for women. These results reflect a far greater parity in employment opportunities than had previously been assumed.

As Mr. Finn writes, the ramifications of this finding may be far-reaching:

> affirmative action programs for women scientists might be criticized as unfair to men. That is, an affirmative action program that gives preference to women over men when two applicants of approximately equal qualifications apply for a job might tend even further to decrease the unemployment of women scientists who do not place restrictions on their job search and thereby make men who do not place restrictions on their job search disadvantaged with respect to similarly situated women.

Despite any changes that employers might make to accommodate applicants with time or location constraints, the fact remains that:

> some of the restrictions on job search cannot be so easily accommodated by changes in employment policies. More than one-half of all unemployed women scientists in the 1978 and 1979 surveys reported that their search

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was restricted by geographic locations. As long as women place such restrictions on their job search more frequently than their male cohorts, a portion of the sex differential in unemployment rates is likely to remain.

Deregulating Subsidized Services

What happens when federal regulations are applied to federally-subsidized services? In a recent issue of the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* (Vol. 3, No. 1, 1983), Susan Rose-Ackerman suggests an answer by investigating the recent history of federal regulation and subsidy of child day care.

In 1980, Congress suspended a set of day care regulations called the Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements (FIDCR). For the most part, these regulations had applied since 1975, when Congress incorporated them into Title XX of the Social Security Act. FIDCR regulated child-to-staff ratios, group sizes, and safety and cleanliness. The standards applied were more stringent than those followed by most states. In addition, FIDCR included requirements for food service, medical examination, social service provision to families, parent conferences, and parent advisory councils.

In her article, "Unintended Consequences: Regulating the Quality of Subsidized Day Care," Rose-Ackerman suggests that the suspension of FIDCR and its replacement with block grants to states were a boon to all concerned. She reaches this conclusion after describing the actual and probable consequences of FIDCR, at least three of which are worth noting.

First, far from encouraging racial and class integration in day care centers, the federal regulations had increased the likelihood of segregation. Since restrictions of the FIDCR applied only to centers that accepted subsidized children, day care centers could either accept enough subsidized children to cover the costs of the restrictions, or avoid the restrictions by accepting no subsidized children at all. Thus, Rose-Ackerman argues, children who were subsidized tended to congregate in certain centers. Since a disproportionate number of subsidized children were poor and black, this amounted to increased segregation.

The author also suggests that FIDCR had limited the number of children who would benefit from a public day care program. Assuming that the subsidy program has a fixed budget and that the subsidy per child is increased to meet the costs of stricter regulations, fewer children will benefit from regulations such as FIDCR than from more lenient—and less costly—requirements.

Finally, Rose-Ackerman shows that uniform, nation-wide rules, such as those under FIDCR, favor large firms over locally-based centers. When standards vary widely from state to state, the growth of day care chains is discouraged. But when standardized requirements for physical capital, materials, and personnel apply throughout the country, chains could operate efficiently enough to squeeze out local centers. The

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author's point, of course, is not that large, for-profit chains result in lower-quality care, but that benefiting such chains is yet another unintended consequence of strict federal regulations.

Quotas: Kenneth Clark vs. NAACP

Sociologist Kenneth Clark, whose research on race has played a large role in setting desegregation and affirmative action policies, now finds himself testifying in favor of another sort of quota: one that keeps black families out of housing. In a recent issue of *Metropolis* ("Integration Quota Faces Court Challenge," January/February 1984), Peter Freiberg reports that this conflict between the goals of open housing and integration has now spilled into the courts:

> In New York and other cities, there are few examples of stable, racially integrated large-scale housing developments. Starrett City, a 153-acre middle-income development in southeast Brooklyn, is one of the few: 64 percent of its almost 6,000 families are white, 36 percent are nonwhite. But this mix has been the object of bitter dispute, and a lawsuit filed by civil rights groups against Starrett City four years ago is scheduled to come up for trial in February. . . .
>
> The controversy over Starrett revolves around the use of a quota to achieve and retain an integrated community. When Starrett opened in 1974, the management, which hoped to have a 70/30 white/non-white mix, held apartments vacant until white families could be found to come close to the ratio. The minority proportion has risen slightly over the years, but Starrett City attempts to fill vacancies with families of the same racial background as those that moved.
>
> Management says it maintains this policy because if the nonwhite proportion were allowed to increase, the "tipping point" would be reached and the project would become all black. Starrett City has lined up support for its position from Dr. Kenneth Clark, who figured prominently in the Supreme Court 1954 school desegregation case. Clark maintains that achieving "an integrated residential community at Starrett City . . . requires deliberate planning of the ratio of white to minority residents." If the project were "color blind," in Clark's view, it would simply end up another one of many segregated projects.
>
> According to a report prepared by Clark, "While the percentage of minorities which will trigger white flight cannot at present be stated with precision, the danger point appears to be around 40 percent minority in a metropolitan area residential development." If this is so, Starrett City is not far from the "danger point": In fact, management says that because the minority families have more children, the complex's actual minority population is now 40 percent. Clark says that when a project "tips," the racial turnover is accompanied by a decline in services, maintenance, and the quality of schools, which in turn accelerates the white flight.
>
> But the three civil rights groups that have filed suit—the NAACP, Columbia University's Fair Housing Clinic, and the Open Housing Center—charge that Starrett's quota violated federal civil rights laws as well as state housing

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law. They included the state Division of Housing and Urban Renewal in the suit because they charge that it condoned the quota system. . . .

Although the lawsuit seeks to end the quota, the groups indicate they would accept a higher percentage for nonwhites. Starrett City, insists Kenneth Kimerling, a lawyer for the groups, has not shown "they couldn't have used a quota that was higher, that was more representative of minority needs, and still maintained an integrated project."

Babbitt Revised

A survey conducted by Gallup for *The Wall Street Journal* shows that when it comes to business ethics, executives apply stricter standards than the public at large. Gallup obtained its data in the summer of 1983 by polling a national general-public sample of 1,558 adults and a sample of 396 middle-level corporate executives. Here are a few of the results, which appeared in consecutive articles in the *Journal* (October 31-November 3, 1983):

- 95 percent of the executives polled said it was wrong for a business executive not to declare $2,500 of interest income on his tax return. Only 79 percent of the public agreed.
- When asked whether it was wrong to pad an expense account with the boss's encouragement, 91 percent of the executives and 65 percent of the public said yes.
- 62 percent of the public thought it was wrong to steal an ashtray from an office, as opposed to 90 percent of the executives.
- 99 percent of the executives, and 84 percent of the public, said it was wrong to steal the same ashtray from a neighbor.
- 63 percent of the public said they would hire a promising applicant although they knew his current salary was $10,000 lower than he claimed, but only 47 percent of the executives agreed.

But most intriguing are the responses to a question on environmental ethics. Gallup asked what a manager of a chemical plant should do if he discovers that waste from the plant is creating slightly more water pollution in a nearby lake than is legally permitted. The pollution is not dangerous to people and at most would endanger a small number of fish; in addition, it would be very costly to curtail. Of the public, 63 percent said that the manager should reveal the problem and spend the money necessary to solve it. The executives were rather more concerned than their media image would indicate: Seventy percent agreed.

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